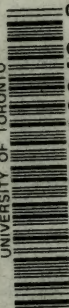
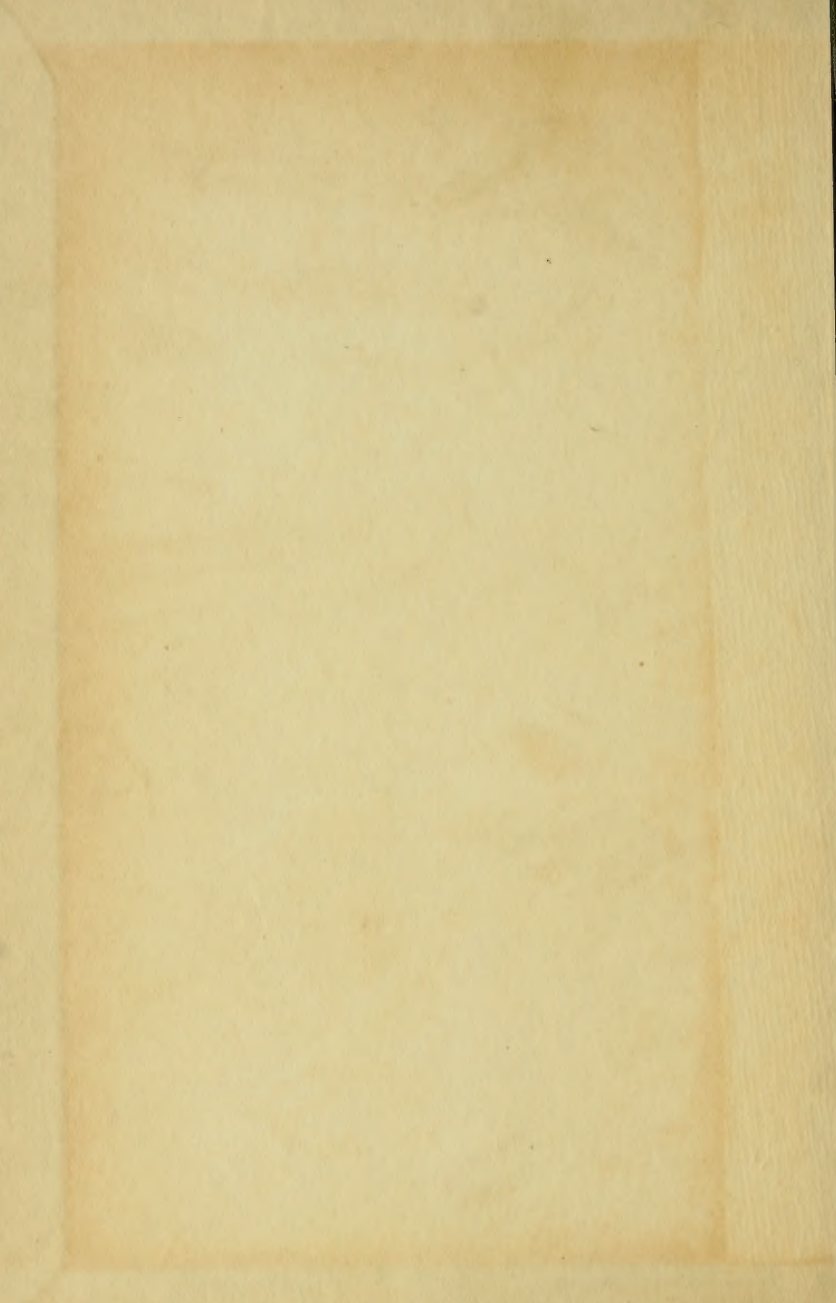
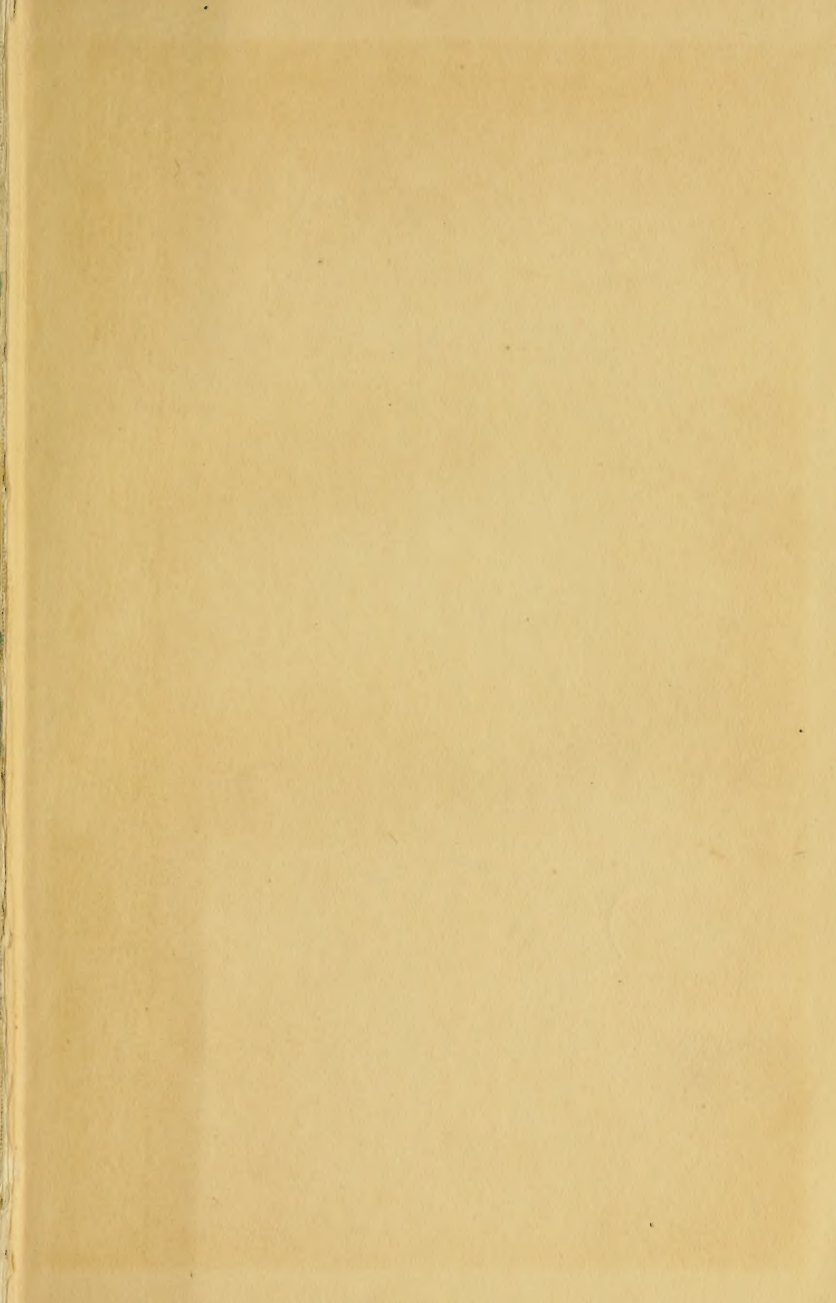


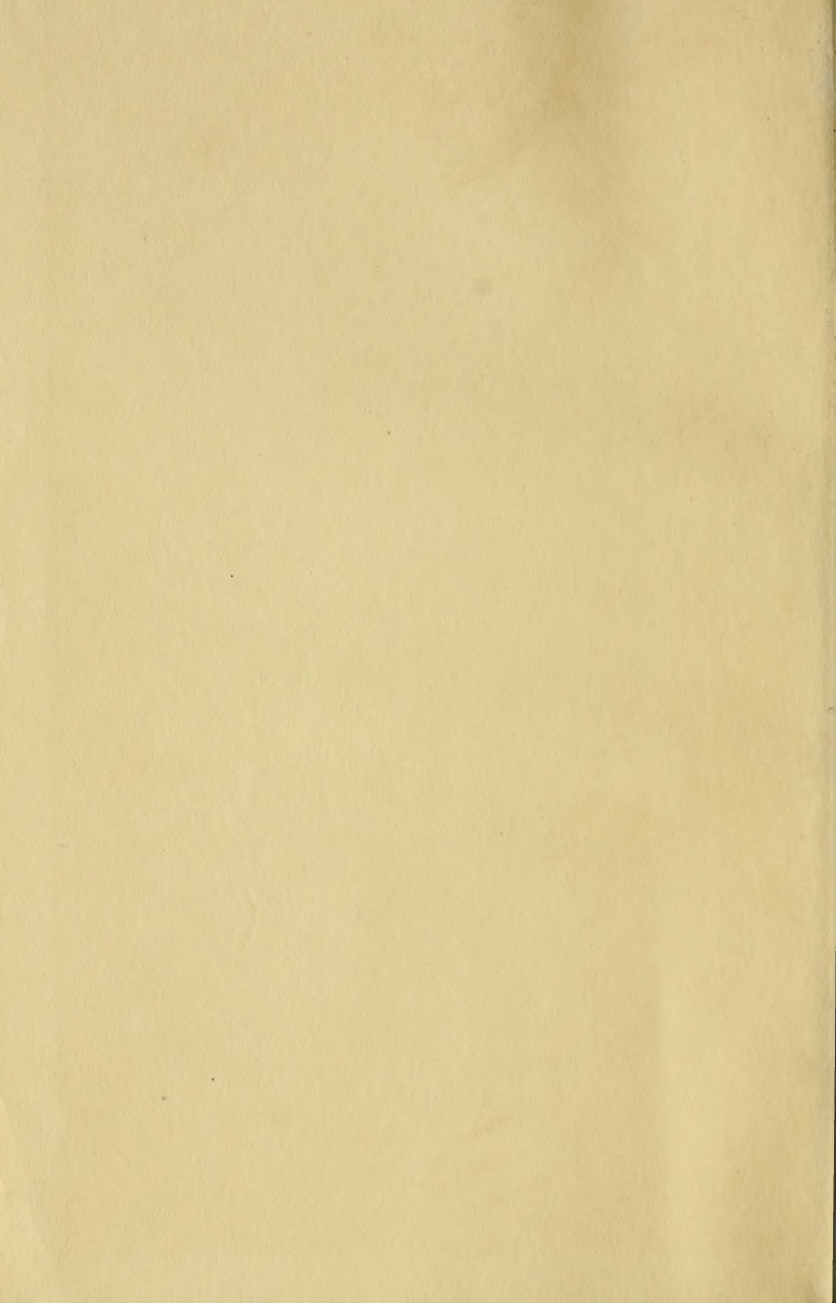
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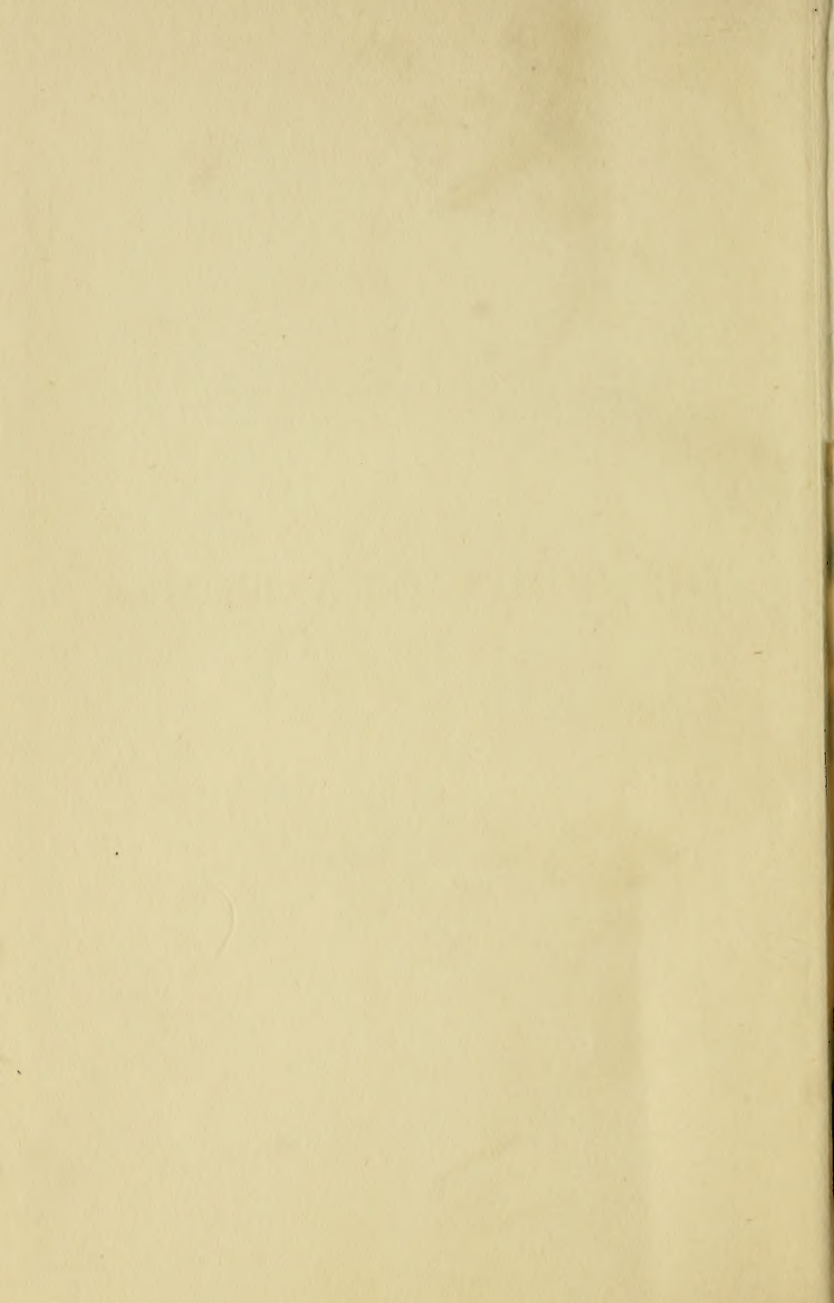










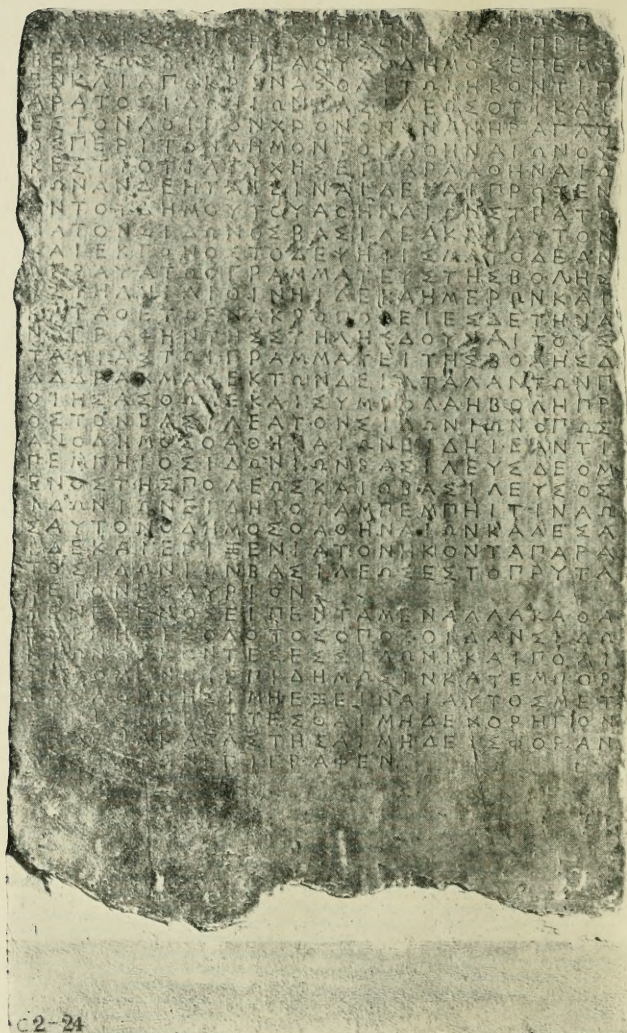


THE HOMER OF ARISTOTLE

THE HOMER OF ARISTOTLE







ATTIC INSCRIPTION OF EARLY FOURTH CENTURY B.C. IN "FLUTED"  
(κατὰ ῥάβδον) WRITING. IN THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD.

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# THE HOMER OF ARISTOTLE

BY

D. S. MARGOLIOUTH

192232  
6.11.24

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## PREFACE

THIS monograph is intended as a supplement to the writer's edition of Aristotle's *Poetics*,<sup>1</sup> the results of which both for text and interpretation are here assumed.<sup>2</sup> It was shown there that the initial words of the Definition of Tragedy should be rendered literally *The feigning of a virtuous experience*, which interpreted from the author's ethical and political theories means "Fiction about kings and queens." And though the philosopher does not like Plato identify the Homeric style with Tragedy, he holds that in these essentials the two coincide; and the Unity which he postulates in Tragedy is found by him to an unsurpassed extent in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

The following is an attempt at working out these theorems from the hints which the treatise offers and on the lines which it suggests. The text of the Homeric Poems employed is that of Monro and Allen in the Oxford Classical Series; and the Translations of Butcher, Lang, Leaf and Myers are assumed to be correct, except where differences are noted. General reference is made to the Greek Grammar of R. Kühner, the Homeric Lexicon of H. Ebeling, and the Dictionary of Greek Proper Names of W. Pape for such matters as come within their scope.

It is not desirable to endeavour to demonstrate anything which is not true, and beauties which are found in sacred books are at times only apparent to members of the religious community with which such books are authoritative. Thus there is a whole library

<sup>1</sup> London, 1911, Hodder and Stoughton.

<sup>2</sup> The most important exception is in 1454 b 2, where the reading of ABCD ἀπλοῦν should have been adopted in lieu of the emendation ἀπόπλουν of E and perhaps Ar.

of works demonstrating the miraculous eloquence of the Koran, though few Europeans ever peruse more than a few pages of it. Some evidence therefore was wanted to remove the probability that Aristotle might in this matter be swayed by religious prejudice.

Two lines suggested themselves. One was obtained from the saying of Dionysius of Halikarnassos<sup>1</sup> that *Homer is the source of every sea, every river and every spring*, in other words that the poets who follow him know nothing of the topics which he handles except what they obtain from him. He however who traces the Cyclic material to its source finds that its authors, though they had nothing else, had the Iliad and the Odyssey practically as they have come down to us. There is no trace of a period of Greek literature when there was less of the Iliad and the Odyssey than we now possess.

The second line was obtained from the acrostic wherewith Italicus signs his verse translation of Iliad I, and the notice of the Tragic Signatures preserved by Diogenes Laertius. The supposition that the letters of the Prologues were required for two purposes at once solved the question asked in antiquity—Why does Homer commence the Iliad with such a terrible word as *μῆνιν*? which is followed by the still worse *οὐλομένην*! The *MH* and *OY* furnish two thirds of the signature *OMHPOY*, and thus the solution of the puzzles began. It was dropped and continued as leisure permitted during many years, and when at last the Prologue to the Iliad without omission or alteration made eight complete iambic lines, containing the indispensable prayer to Apollo, and matter resembling what is to be found in the prefaces to other poems, the work appeared to be well advanced. And when the Preface to the Odyssey had been worked out, and was found to contain the statement that each of the Poems had been composed by the author in 24 Books, the

<sup>1</sup> *De Compositione Verborum* § 24.

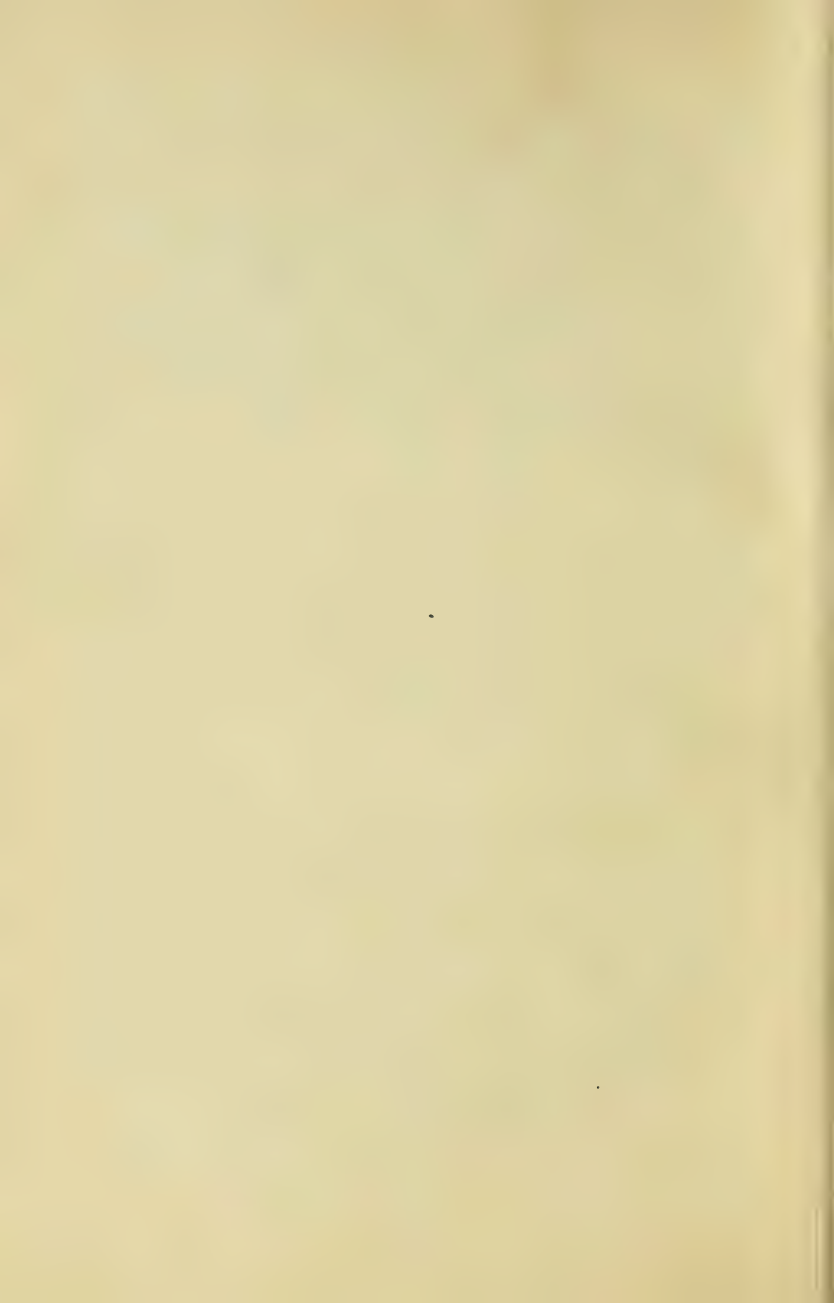


writer had obtained what the Dramatists call "the reward of the toil."

It will be shown that even for the solution of these puzzles the aid of Aristotle has been indispensable ; by way of compensation they show that he had correctly understood the structure of the Poems.

I have to thank the authorities of the Ashmolean Museum for their permission to reproduce the beautiful specimen of perpendicular writing which appears as frontispiece.

*Oxford, October, 1923.*



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## CHAPTER I

### THE CIPHER OF ATTIC TRAGEDY

THE Attic Tragedies are Homeric Miracle-plays, and like other Miracle-plays have for their first object to render vivid and to simplify the content of Scripture, a title which was perhaps first given to the Iliad and Odyssey. Since they are wholly dependent on Homer, it is probable that any cipher which they employ will prove to be a simplification of Homeric cipher, if there be any. Now the Historian of Philosophy<sup>1</sup> records that Epicharmus, who, if not a Tragedian, was a dramatist, and, being of the sixth century B.C., comes near the commencement of continuous Hellenic literature, armed most of his works with cryptic signatures to prove their authenticity. From another story told by the same writer<sup>2</sup> we learn that the practice was also employed by authors of Tragedy, and indeed can gather its nature; the Tragic signature was an anagram of the first two iambic lines in the play. If any one thinks sixty letters (the average number in this case) too many for an anagram, his notion is dispelled when he learns about the astronomical anagrams (or logogriphs) of some centuries ago. Huyghens announced his discovery of Saturn's ring as follows :

*aaaaaaa ccccc d eeeee g h iiiiil lll mm nnnnnnnnnn oooo  
pp q rr s tttt uuuuu*

<sup>1</sup> Diogenes Laertius VIII. iii. §2.

<sup>2</sup> This is explained in the *Chronograms*.



which the English mathematician Wallis solved with remarkable rapidity<sup>1</sup> as follows :

*annulo cingitur tenui plano, nusquam cohaerente, ad eclipticam inclinato.*

The astronomers made the construction easy for themselves, and the solution difficult for their readers. They merely mixed the letters, or (as in the above case) sorted them into groups. There was no rule whereby they could be rearranged, and the observation of which would certify the correctness of the solution. The Greek dramatists made the construction difficult for themselves, and the solution easy for their readers. The letters requiring rearrangement were worked into iambic couplets dealing with wholly different matters, and reasonably appropriate in meaning ; and the reader, knowing in anticipation the sort of matter which the cipher contained, was also guided in rearrangement by the rigid metre required in the solution. Since however no servant can serve two masters with equal fidelity, it was rarely possible to compose the initial iambics of a Tragedy in such a way that they failed to reveal to the careful observer the fact that they harboured a puzzle. The insipidity of the Euripidean prologues, and the obscurity of the Aeschylean, are satirized at length in the Frogs of Aristophanes, who may or may not have been acquainted with the reason. These initial lines are apt to be the despair of editors ; *nondum sanati* is the verdict over the first lines of the *Ion*, the *Elektra* of Euripides, the *Antigone*, and many another drama. Frequently, where there is no grammatical

<sup>1</sup> R. Grant, *History of Physical Astronomy*, p. 257. Krit-zinger, *die Errungenschaften der Astronomie*, p. 193.

or metrical difficulty, there is something in the expression which occasions surprise ; and the hypothesis of corruption is far from plausible. Corruption of the first lines of a drama is quite unlikely to occur, though exceptional circumstances may occasion it. Normally author, copyist, and corrector, will be widest awake at this point of their work.

Now these peculiarities of the initial lines, which the editors endeavour to eliminate, are due to the needs of the second purpose to which the letters are set. And one who works for even a short time at decipherment of the underlying prefaces will find himself able to solve the puzzles with comparative ease and certainty. For there are certain formulae which are constantly repeated, and for which the expert immediately looks. ἀλλάσσειν and στρέφειν, " to shift " and " to twist," στοιχεῖα and γράμματα, both meaning " letters," τοῖνδ' ἐποῖν and τοῖνδ' ἰάμβοιν " of this couplet ", occur in the guiding lines with such frequency that one who has solved a few at the mere sight of λλ, μβ, χ, γρμμ, obtains the solution of half the puzzle ; and since the subjects with which the hidden couplets deal are known in advance, and can only be expressed in a few ways, the rest of the solution does not delay him very long. One thing, however, is clear : viz., that only one solution in each case is admissible. Since the manifest lines are so often sacrificed, it is unlikely that sacrifices are demanded to a similar extent of the hidden lines ; and indeed it is the rigidity of the rules which enables the reader to solve the puzzles.

Hence the solutions should leave no just ground for attack, provided it be remembered that in the one

example which Athenaeus preserves of a poem made up of "well-known words, which only the ingenious will recognise", the Hymn of Kastorion, the *caesura* is neglected.<sup>1</sup> This is the account which the poem gives of itself; Athenaeus thought the artifice consisted in making each dipodion consist of ten letters; Cobet substituted eleven for ten, and proceeded to use Procrustean methods, involving doubtful, not to say barbarous, Greek. Other faults should however be avoided; Aeschylus in the Chronogram of the Septem warns the reader that it is in "faint iambic metre", because some anapaests are used where the tragic iambic only admits them in the case of proper names. If therefore any just faults (other than the absence of *caesura*) can be found in the following solutions, the inference to be drawn is that the solution is not perfectly correct, and can be improved.

The casual notice wherein Diogenes preserves the secret of the tragic cipher contains no hint that it went beyond the Signature; but the fact that the Signature of the Agamemnon is an imperfect sentence requiring a sequel showed that it extended further; and it was found that the first iambic passage of every Tragedy that has been preserved contains no fewer than eight lines of cipher, divided into four couplets, to be classified as follows:

1, 2: the Signature, containing either the author's name or such description as will identify him.

3, 4: the Chronogram, containing the number of the Olympiad wherein the Drama was composed.

<sup>1</sup> Athenaeus 454 f. The first line is

σὲ τὸν βόλοισ νιφοκτύποις δυσχείμερον.

5, 6: the Ascription, containing homage to the goddess Athene.

7, 8: the Admonition, warning the reader that after the sixth line there is no cipher or none which will tell him anything.

The sole exception to this system appears to be the Philoktetes of Sophokles, where the Signature occupies three lines, making two anagrams of respectively a couplet and a single trimeter.

Since it is desirable to convince the reader, if possible, that he is in the presence of a fact, and not of a fancy; that no operation is being conducted here which he cannot perform himself, and that if he will endeavour to solve the anagrams he will arrive either at the same results as are to be given here, or (if the following solutions are imperfect) at such as the writer would accept in lieu of his own: it will be best to begin with the Admonitions. If it can be shown that the seventh and eighth lines can regularly be so rearranged as to contain a warning to look for no more cipher, it will be evident that the first three couplets are in cipher; for no one would take the trouble to warn people against looking for it any further, unless there had been good reason for doing so up to that point. Now there is little probability that in any one case the letters of a fourth couplet could without the author's intention be capable of being so rearranged as to say in iambic metre *it is useless to shift the letters of the fourth couplet*; chance would not give exactly that amount and neither more nor less. When we find the same result in a second case, the probability is vastly reduced; and with a third and a fourth case this improbability becomes reduced to an

impossibility. What then we shall first endeavour to establish on the faith of the first group with which we shall deal is that the first four couplets of the iambic passages were consciously regarded by the dramatists as anagram-units, and indeed that this employment of them was taught in the schools of Tragedy, since it is to be found in all the prologues of tragedies which have come down to us, whether by the three chief masters or by others. We shall then proceed to inferences more nearly connected with our subject.

#### ADMONITIONS (LINES 7 AND 8) OF SOPHOKLES

##### I. Antigone

καὶ νῦν τί τοῦτ' αὖ φασι πανδήμῳ πόλει  
κήρυγμα θεῖναι τὸν στρατηγὸν ἀρτίως

Solution :

ἐποῖν τετάρτοιον γραμμάτων τραγωιδίας  
πύθοι' ἂν οὔτι καὐτά φησιν ἢ κλύης

*From the letters of the fourth couplet of a Tragedy you would ascertain nothing; and they say so themselves, if you will hear.*

This proposition, which appears to be expressed here simply and neatly, has now to be traced through the remaining dramas. It implies, as has been seen, that the three preceding couplets do give some information.

##### 2. Trachiniae :

ναῖουσ' ἔτ' ἐν Πλευρῶνι νυμφείων ὄτλον  
ἄλγιστον ἔσχον εἴ τις Αἰτωλὶς γυνή

Here ἔτ' was added by Erfurdt. Ordinarily emendations of these lines spoil the puzzles; the licence which



would be involved in the omission of this syllable would however appear to be too great ; whence we may assume it should be part of the text.

Solution :

ἐποῖν τετάρτοι μὴ σύ γ' ἄλλασσ' ὦ φίλε  
στοιχεῖ' ἔν' οὔτι νῦν λέγω σὺν νῶι νέον

*Do not, my friend, shift the letters of the fourth couplet, wherein I now say nothing new with a meaning.*

3. Aias :

εἴτ' ἔνδον εἴτ' οὐκ ἔνδον εὔ δέ σ' ἐκφέρει  
κυνὸς Λακαίνης ὥς τις εὐρινος βάσις

Solution :

σύνες τέταρται δ' ὥς δύο ῥήσεις κεναί  
κενὸς σὺ δ' εἰ βούλει κενὸν κινεῖν σοφέ

*And understand that the two fourth utterances are empty ; and you are empty yourself, wise man, if you wish to disturb what is empty.*

κινεῖν varies with στρέφειν and ἀλλάσσειν in the sense of shifting in the language of the cipher.

4. Philoktetes :

This drama is exceptional in devoting the first three lines to the signature as will be seen. The Admonition therefore occupies lines 8 and 9.

ὅτ' οὔτε λοιβῆς ἡμῖν οὔτε θυμάτων  
παρῆν ἐκήλοισ προσθιγεῖν ἀλλ' ἀγρίαις

Solution :

ἐποῖν τετάρτοι γράμματ' ἀλλάσσων ἴθι  
πυθοῦ· κενή γ' ἡ ῥῆσις εἰ βούλοι' ὄλη

*Shifting the letters of the fourth couplet, come and ask*

*them questions ; the answer would be wholly empty if you chose to do so.*

5. Oedipus Tyrannus :

ἄλλων ἀκούειν αὐτὸς ᾧδ' ἐλήλυθα  
ὁ πᾶσι κλεινὸς Οἰδίπους καλούμενος

Solution :

δυοῖν ἀκούων οἷ' ἔοικ' ἐποῖν σὺ τῷ  
ἄλλασσε μηδέν, ἀλλ' ἔθ' ἀλλάσσου κόπου

*Hearing what you should from the couplet, shift nothing therein but come and get a shift from your trouble.*

6. Oedipus at Kolonos :

στέργειν γὰρ αἱ πάθαι με χῶ χρόνος ξυνὼν  
μακρὸς διδάσκει καὶ τὸ γενναῖον τρίτον

Solution :

κᾶνδον τετάρτοι γ' ἐξ ἐποῖν τραγωιδίας  
οὐκ ἔσθ' ὁ κρίνων χάριν ἔχοις ἂν γράμμασι

*And within the Tragedy, starting from the fourth couplet, There is nothing which you could pick out with gratitude to the letters.*

7. Elektra :

ἀγορὰ Λύκειος οὐξ ἀριστερᾶς δ' ὄδε  
"Ἦρας ὁ κλεινὸς ναός, οἱ δ' ἰκάνομεν

Solution :

ὅς ἀκροᾷ γ' εὖρ' ἄξι' ἀκροάσεις  
"ἄλλασσε μηδέν" ἐκ δυοῖν τοσοῖνδ' ὄροι

*You are listening, find worthy of listening to  
"Shift nothing" out of the two final lines that are so long.  
For the form ἀκροάσεις see Kühner i. 345.*

For the purpose of adducing evidence it might seem

unnecessary to go further ; for to a person who is guided by the law of probability one, or at most, two of these anagrams should be sufficient to prove the double line cipher : a series of five cases wherein the *fourth couplet* is actually mentioned, and says truly about itself that it furnishes no information, whence it is useless to shift its letters, is wholly beyond the range of accident. But, as has been seen, if the fourth couplet warns the reader not to look for cipher in it, it follows that what precedes will repay the shifting. Even where the fourth is not mentioned the dual is used, and it is this wherein the main secret of the cipher consists.

It is not worth while refuting the supposition that *any* pair of Greek iambics can be so shifted as to say that the fourth couplet is not worth shifting : the person who endeavoured to show that something analogous could be done in the case of the Chronograms had to make the humiliating confession that he had secretly falsified the text for the purpose : a confession which if extorted at the card-table would have rendered the " little flaw " in his character innocuous for the rest of his life.<sup>1</sup>

If then in spite of the fourth couplet perpetually urging us not to shift its letters, we continue to carry out this operation, it is because it is desirable to show that the system of cipher which is to be applied to the Homeric prologues is one which Homer's heirs, the dramatists, maintained as one of the mysteries of their craft down to the very latest drama that has come down to us.

<sup>1</sup> Neither the Greek nor the translation of this performance was in any case defensible.

## ADMONITIONS OF AESCHYLUS

## 1. Persae (lines 182, 183) :

ἡ μὲν πέπλοισι Περσικοῖς ἡσκημένη  
ἡ δ' αὖτε Δωρικοῖσιν εἰς ὄψιν μολεῖν

## Solution :

ὄψει δέ· μὴ κίνει σὺ μηδὲ κρῖν' ἐμοῖν  
ἐποῖν ποίησιν· ἡ τρὶς ἡλλασσες κόπῳ

*And you will see ; Do not disturb or question the poetry of my couplet ; truly you have thrice been shifting laboriously.*

## 2. Supplices (lines 182, 183) :

ὄχλον δ' ὑπασπιστῆρα καὶ δορυσσόον  
λεύσσω ξὺν ἵπποις καμπύλοις τ' ὀχήμασιν

## Solution :

στοιχεῖα μὴ σὺ τοῖνδ' ὑπαλλάξας δυοῖν  
πρόσχημ' ὅπως κρῖν'· ἄνυσις πολὺς κόπος

*Do not shift and interrogate the letters of this couplet, as though they were a mask ; the result would be " much trouble."*

For the crasis see Kühner i. p. 175. The word ἄνυσις is classical.

## 3. Prometheus :

τὸ σὸν γὰρ ἄνθος παντέχνου πυρὸς σέλας  
θνητοῖσι κλέψας ὥπασεν τοιᾶσδέ τοι

## Solution :

ἐποῖν τετάρτοις πάνθ' ὅσ' ἡλλασσες σὺ γ' ἂν  
καπῶν ὅσ' ἔψοντ' ὀρθὰ σὺ στοιχεῖα δός

*Set straight the letters of the fourth couplet which you would have shifted, and of the verses which are to follow.*

δός is for ἀπόδος.

4. Eumenides :

Φοίβη δίδωσιν δ' ἡ γενέθλιον δόσιν

Φοίβωι τὸ Φοίβης δ' ὄνομ' ἔχει παρώνυμον

Here the *ν* of δίδωσιν must clearly be required for the hidden lines, as the spoken line does not require it.

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἰάμβων ὀγδόων ἐφ' ἐβδόμοις

Θήβησιν ἦιδεν Οἰδίπουν φιλοφρονῶν

*The letters of the eighth iambics following on the seventh were sung by an entertainer of Oedipus at Thebes.*

In this drama the numeration by lines instead of couplets is found in the Signature also. Zenobius has the proverb *Βοιώτια αἰνίγματα*. The jest about Oedipus is also found in the Admonition of the Alkestis.

5. Septem contra Thebas :

ὑμνοῖθ' ὑπ' ἀστῶν φροιμίοις πολυρρόθοις

οἰμώγμασιν θ' ὦν Ζεὺς ἀλεξητήριος

Solution :

ὀρθοῖς ἔθι ρυθμοῖσι σῶζε σωφρονῶν

ὃ μὴ σὺ τούτοις γράμμ' ὑπαλλάξῃς ἐποῖν

*Come, retain, if you are wise, in its unaltered rhythm the writing of this couplet, which you are not to shift.*

6. Agamemnon :

ἀστέρας ὅταν φθίνωσιν ἀντολὰς τε τῶν

καὶ νῦν φυλάσσω λαμπάδος τὸ σύμβολον

Solution :

σὺ τῶν τετάρτων δ' οὐκ ἂν ἀλλάσσοις ἐπῶν

ἴαμβον ἄλλον φθὰς σόφισμ' ἂν ὕστατον

*You would not by substituting another iambic for the fourth verses anticipate the last puzzle.*



The Agamemnon is exceptional in continuing the cipher for ten lines ; indeed its extraordinary phrase *φάτιν ἀλώσιμόν τε βάξιν* is a sufficient indication of a puzzle. Any one who cares to solve it will find that it with justice declares this drama to be the best of all tragedies.

The Admonition of the Choephoroe is lost.

#### ADMONITIONS OF EURIPIDES

##### 1. *Kyklops* :

*Ἐγκέλαδον ἰτέαν εἰς μέσῃν θενῶν δορὶ  
ἔκτεινα φέρ' ἴδω τοῦτ' ἰδὼν ὄναρ λέγῃ*

*Solution :*

*ἀ δ' ἐν τετάρτοις ἀλλαγῇ στρέφων δυοῖν  
ἔρεῖς ἔμοιγ' ᾧδ'· ἔνδοθεν κείνω κενώ*

*Shifting with variation the contents of the fourth couplet  
you will say to me thus : Those two are empty within.*

##### 2. *Alkestis* :

*θνητῷ παρ' ἀνδρὶ τῶνδ' ἄποιν' ἠνάγκασεν  
ἐλθὼν δὲ γαῖαν τήνδ' ἐβουφόρβουν ξένωι*

*Solution :*

*ἐποῖν τετάρτοις δὲ σὺ γράφων ἀνὴν λαβὼν  
Θήβηθεν ἀνάκριν' ἐξάγων δ' ᾧδ' Οἰδίπουν*

*If you would write what is contained in the fourth couplet,  
you had best fetch Oedipus from Thebes, bring him here,  
and question him.*

##### 3. *Medea* :

*Μήδεια πύργους γῆς ἔπλευσ' Ἰωλκίας  
ἔρωτι θυμὸν ἐκπλαγεῖσ' Ἰάσονος*

*Medea must have had some adequate reason for*

sailing to the towers of the Iolkian land, and this appears to be the

Solution :

εἰ γράμματ' ἀλλάσσεις ἐποῖν, δύω γ' ἴθι  
ἴσω σύ γ' εὖρ' ἢ λυ' ἔπη· κενὸς κόπος

*If you are shifting the letters of the couplet, at least find or loose two words of the same size : idle toil.*

4. Heraklidae :

ἐξὸν κατ' Ἄργος ἡσύχως ναίειν πόνων  
πλείστων μετέσχον εἰς ἀνὴρ Ἡρακλείων

The licence exhibited here is scarcely to be paralleled. Porson's emendation is very elegant, but spoils the puzzle.

Solution :

στοιχεῖα μὴ σὺ τῶν ἐπῶν χαίρων στένων  
ἄλλασσέ γ'· ἦν ἔρξης ἀρεῖ κενὸν κόπον

*Do not you rejoicing and sighing shift the letters of my words ; if you do you will be undertaking idle toil.*

5. Hippolytus :

ἔνεστι γὰρ δὴ κὰν θεῶν γένει τόδε  
τιμώμενοι χαίρουσιν ἀνθρώπων ὕπο

Solution :

ἐποῖν τετάρτοι γράμμαθ' ὧδ' ἔχειν θέσιν  
ἔα σύ γ' ἦν πρίν· ὦ νοῶ κενῶ δύω

*Leave the letters of the fourth couplet here to have the same location as before. The two lines I mean are empty.*

5. Andromache :

ἦτις πόσιν μὲν Ἑκτορ' ἐξ Ἀχιλλέως  
θανόντ' ἐσείδον παῖδά θ' ὄν τίκτω πόσει



Solution :

ἔπος τέταρτον δὴ μ' ἰδὼν στοιχεῖτ' ἴθι  
ἄλλασσ' ἐπῶν κόπον κενόν θ' ἔξεις τίνα

*When you see me, the fourth verse, go and shift the letters of the words and what idle toil you will have !*

7. Hekabe :

Πολυμήστορος πρὸς δῶμα Θρηικίου ξένου  
ὃς τὴν ἀρίστην Χερρωνησίαν πλάκα

Solution :

σὺ μὴ τετάρτοις ῥυθμὸν ἀλλάξεις, νοῶν  
ἂ χρή σ', ἐποῖν· πρόρρησις ἥδ' ἄκος κόπου

*Do not you shift the arrangement of the fourth couplet, knowing what you should ; this Admonition is a saving of labour.*

8. Supplices :

Αἰγεί δάμαρτα Λοξίου μαντεύμασιν  
ἐς τάσδε γὰρ βλέψας' ἐπηυξάμην τάδε

Solution :

μὴ σύ γε τετάρτοις ἐξ ἱαμβεῖοις ἔπη  
ἄλλασσ'· ἀνέψυχας δ' ἔα δ' αὖ γράμματα

*Do not shift the words out of the fourth iambic couplet. You have had a respite, and let the letters also have one.*

9. The Mad Herakles :

τεκνοῦσι παίδων παισίν, ἔνθεν ἐξέφυ  
Κρέων Μενικέως παῖς ἄναξ τῆσδε χθονός

Solution :

τῶνδ' ἐξ ἐπῶν στοιχεῖα μὴ κίνει, σὺ δ' αὖ  
κενὰς φράσεις κενὸν παθῶν θ' ἔξεις πόνον

*Do not disturb the letters out of these verses. If you do, you will have empty phrases and have suffered idle labour.*

10. Ion :

τά τ' ὄντα καὶ μέλλοντα θεσπίζων αἰεὶ  
ἔστιν γὰρ οὐκ ἄσημος Ἑλλήνων πόλις

Solution :

ἐπῶν τετάρτων τμημ' ἴσαζ', ἕα, τίθει  
ἄλλασσ' ἔν' ἀλλάσσει κόπου κενὸν λόγον

*Adjust a portion of the fourth verses, ha !, arrange it so :  
Shift, in order to get an empty utterance in exchange for  
your trouble,*

11. Troiades :

εὖνοι' ἀπέστη τῶν ἐμῶν Φρυγῶν πόλει  
ἢ νῦν καπνοῦται καὶ πρὸς Ἀργείου δορός

Solution :

ἐπῶν τετάρτων μὴ γραφὰς κίνει. ποιῶν  
εὖροις γὰρ οὐδέν ἄν σὺ πλὴν οἴου κόπου

*Do not move the writings of the fourth verses. For,  
If you do, you will find nothing but what trouble !*

12. Elektra :

ναῶν τέθεικε σκῦλα πλεῖστα βαρβάρων  
κάκεϊ μὲν εὐτύχησεν· ἐν δὲ δώμασι

Solution :

σὺ δ' ἐκ τετάρτων κρῖν' ἱαμβείων ἐπῶν  
ἄλλασε μηδέν· βὰς ἔχ' αὖ κεύθει κενά

*Do you pick out of the fourth iambic verses  
Shift nothing : have besides as you proceed They conceal  
emptiness.*

13. Iphigeneia in Tauri :

αὔραις ἐλίσσων κυανέαν ἄλα στρέφει  
ἔσφαξεν Ἑλένης οὐνεχ' ὥς δοκεῖ πατήρ

Solution :

στοιχεῖα τῶνδ' ἐπῶν ὅλ' ἀλλάξας κενὰς  
φράσεις ἐφευρήσεις· ἐνῆν, εὖρ' αὖ, κενά

*If you shift the letters of these verses you will find them to be entirely empty phrases. Find further "there was emptiness inside."*

14. Helene :

Ψαμάθην ἐπειδὴ λέκτρ' ἀφῆκεν Αἰόλου  
τίκτει δὲ τέκνα δισσὰ τοῖσδε δώμασι

Solution :

ὄψει τετάρτῳ τί, σόφ', ἔπη διδάσκετον  
καὶ μηδὲν ἀλλάσσειν μάθ'· ἦι δὲ δεῖ κύκα

*You will see, wise man, what the fourth couplet teaches, and learn to alter nothing; but mix the letters where it is proper.*

15. Phoenissae :

ὅς παιῖδα γήμας Κύπριδος Ἀρμονίαν ποτὲ  
Πολύδωρον ἐξέφυσε τοῦ δὲ Λάβδακον

Solution :

δυοῖν δ' ἰάμβοιν μηδὲν ἄλλασσ' ἐξ ἔδρας  
οὐ γὰρ τόκος τάδ' ἀπὸ κόπου πρέπων ἔφν

*Of the two iambic verses shift nothing from its place. For this is no fitting profit resulting from the toil*

16. Orestes :

ἄερι ποτᾶται καὶ τίνει ταύτην δίκην  
ὥς μὲν λέγουσιν ὅτι θεοῖς ἄνθρωπος ὢν

Solution :

ἐποῖν τετάρτοι μὴ σὺ κίνει τὴν θέσιν  
τάδ' ἄθλα γάρ, νοοῖς ἄν εὔ, τῶι σῶι κόπωι

*Do not disturb the position of the fourth couplet ;  
For you should know well that this is the reward of your  
trouble.*

17. Bacchae :

τόδ' ἐγγὺς οἴκων καὶ δόμων ἐρείπια  
τυφόμενα Δίου τε πυρὸς ἔτι ζῶσαν φλόγα

Solution :

γράμματα τετάρτοις ἴδι' ἐποῖν κυκλῶν σοφέ  
ἴσαζ' ὅπου δύο σοφῶ γ'· οὐδὲν λέγει

*Mixing the letters peculiar to the fourth couplet, ingenious  
person,*

*Adjust them where are the two wise words : Nothing said.*

18. Iphigeneia in Aulis :

τὸ πρᾶγμα δ' ἀπόρως εἶχε Τυνδάρεωι πατρί  
δοῦναί τε μὴ δοῦναί τε τῆς τύχης ὅπως

Solution :

ἀπ' ἐποῖν τετάρτοις μὴ σὺ δὴ τάρασσ' ἐμοῖν  
στοιχεῖ' ἄχῃ δ' αὖ· τῷδε γὰρ προύπτω δύο

*Do not stir up out of my fourth couplet*

*Letters and troubles therewith ; for these two things are  
foreseen.*

19. Rhesos :

σύρδην ἅπαντα τῷδ' ἀναλῶσαι δορί  
εἰ γὰρ φαεινοὶ μὴ συνέσχον ἡλίου

Solution :

στοιχεῖα μὴ σὺ τῶνδε νῦν ἄλλασσ' ὄρων  
ὅπη δύ' ἐννοία δ' ἀνιαρᾷ γραφῇ

*Do not now shift the letters of these final verses ;*

*But only where the troublesome writing has two meanings.*

This concludes the Admonitions of the dramas ascribed ordinarily to the three chief dramatists. The Hypothesis of the Rhesos contains an alternative Prologue, which we learn from the Signature to have been the work of one Zenokrates, whereas the Chronogram indicates the date Ol. 100. Its Admonition is of the usual style :

ἐξ οὗ γ' ἔκρινε Κύπριν Ἀλέξανδρος θεὸν  
κάλλει προήκειν τῆς ἐμῆς εὐμορφίας

*προήκειν* is an emendation for *προσήκειν*. Either will suit the Admonition.

Solution :

ἐμοῖν ἐποῖν σὺ μηκέτ' ἀλλάξῃς γραφάς  
πρόλεξιν ἔρδ' ἔκκρουέ θ'. εὐρήσεις κενά

*Do not proceed to shift the writing of my couplet. Make a guess and knock out the words : You will find them empty.*

If *κενάς* were read it would agree with *γραφάς*.

#### ADMONITIONS OF MINOR DRAMATISTS

A considerable fragment of a tragedy called Danae is printed among the spurious fragments of Euripides. We learn from the Signature that its author was one Eurykrates son of Dysmachos, and from the Chronogram that it belongs to the 98th Olympiad. Its Admonition is the following :

Πυθῶδ' ἀφίκτο καὶ λέγει Φοίβωι τάδε  
πῶς ἂν γένοιτο σπέρμα παιδὸς ἐν δόμῳ

Solution :

καποῖν τετάρτοιον ἄθλον εἶφ' ὃ γ' ἐπιδίδως  
πόδε δὺ' ἱαμβεῖω σάφ' ὦι κόπος μέγας

*And say what reward you offer for the fourth couplet.  
Two iambic feet clearly to one who takes "a lot o' toil."*

The fragment 230 of Euripides which is quoted from a drama called Archelaos is shown by the Signature to be by one Nikostratos, and by the Chronogram to belong to Ol. 100. Its Admonition is the following :

Πελασγιώτας δ' ὠνομασμένους τὸ πρὶν  
Δαναοὺς καλεῖσθαι νόμον ἔθηκ' ἄν' Ἑλλάδα

Solution :

σὺ δὲ κενὰ πῶς οὐ τοῖνδ' ἂν ἀλλάσσοι' ἐμοῖν  
ἄθηκα γράμματ' ἔνδοθ' ἀλλάσσων ἐποῖν

*And how could you fail to get an empty exchange if you were to shift the letters which I have written inside this couplet.*

These are all the Admonitions which appear to have come down to us and—in the present writer's judgment—the person who denies the existence of cipher in this case might equally well deny the existence of cipher altogether. For the 35 Admonitions all say the same thing, and in much the same phraseology ; " Look for no cipher in the fourth couplet " is the message which they conceal. The reader will then be justified in looking for it in the three preceding couplets ; and he will invariably find it, and with the same order of subjects.

#### ASCRPTIONS OF AESCHYLUS

I. Supplices (180, 181) :

ὀρῶ κόνιν ἄναυδον ἄγγελον στρατοῦ  
σύριγγες οὐ σιγῶσιν ἀξονήλατοι



Solution :

τρίτου λόγου σοῦ γίνετ' ἔργον ἀγλαόν  
σὺν ᾧ γ' ἀνασσαν ἀξιῶ Διὸς Κόρην

*Thy third utterance has a glorious task,*

*Seeing that therein I magnify the Queen, the Daughter of Zeus.*

2. Persae (180, 181) :

ὥς τῆς πάροιθεν εὐφρόνης λέξω δέ σοι  
ἐδοξάτην μοι δύο γυναῖκ' εὐείμονε

Solution :

τρίτος λόγος δ' εὐφημος ἦν. εὖξει ἔξ ἐμῶν  
ἐπέων Ἀθάναι δ' εὐνόει κούρη Διός

*The third utterance was auspicious ; and out of my words  
you will pray to Athene : Be gracious, Daughter of Zeus !*

3. Septem contra Thebas :

εἰ δ' αἶθ' ὃ μὴ γένοιτο συμφορὰ τύχοι  
'Ετεοκλέης ἂν εἰς πολὺς κατὰ πτόλιν

Solution :

ἡλλαγμένα στοιχεῖ' ἔπους ἔφη τρίτου  
έκόντ' Ἀθάνα τέκος Ὀλυμπίου Διός

*The letters of the third verse shifted said*

*Willingly : Athene is the child of Olympian Zeus.*

4. Prometheus :

ὑψηλοκρήμυοις τὸν λεωργὸν ὀχμάσαι  
ἀδαμαντίναις πέδησιν ἐν ἀρρήκτοις πέτραις

*The sacrifice made to the Ascription is extraordinary.*

Solution :

ἄλλασσε γραμμαῖν δ' ὅσα τρίταιν στοιχεῖ' ἐμαῖν  
τὴν Διός ἄρ' ὅψει πη κόρην ἣν προσκυνῶ



*Now shift all the letters which belong to my third pair of lines ;*

*Somewhere you will see Daughter of Zeus whom I worship.*

5. Agamemnon :

καὶ τοὺς φέροντας χεῖμα καὶ θέρος βροτοῖς  
λαμπροὺς δυνάστας ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι

Solution :

τρίτους δ' ἰάμβους πάρα κεκραμέν' ἐς ῥυθμὸν  
στοιχεῖ' Ἀθάνα προστάτις πόλεος φράσει

*The letters diverted to another rhythm from the third iambs will say : Athene is Protectress of the City.*

6. Eumenides :

λάχει θελούσης οὐδὲ πρὸς βίαν τινὸς  
Τιτανὶς ἄλλη παῖς χθονὸς καθέζετο

Solution :

θεός τ' Ἀθάνα Παλλὰς ἡ Διὸς Κόρη  
ἐν τὸν στίχον σὺ βάλλ' ἔθι στοιχεῖ' ἔπους

*And, letters of the verse, come, insert the line :*

*Goddess Athene, Pallas, Daughter of Zeus.*

The Ascription of the Choephoroe is missing.

# ASCRPTIONS OF SOPHOKLES

I. Aias :

πάλαι κυνηγετοῦντα καὶ μετρούμενον  
ἵχνη τὰ κείνου νοεχάραχθ' ὅπως ἴδῃς

Solution :

εὖχον τρίτων στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν κυκῶν μάλα  
εὐχὴν, Ἀθάναν γ' ἅμα τ' ἔπη Διὸς Κόρην

*Pray as you mix with a will the letters of the third verses for an object—"Athene" and the words "Daughter of Zeus" as well.*

## 2. Antigone :

οὐτ' αἰσχροὺς οὐτ' ἄτιμόν ἐσθ' ὅποιον οὐ  
τῶν σῶν τε καμῶν οὐκ ὅπωπ' ἐγὼ κακῶν

If Athene did not take offence at such a couplet being used as her Ascription, she must have been more forgiving than we ordinarily suppose.

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν αὖ τῶν τρίτων κυκῶν ὁμοῦ  
ποῶ γ' Ἀθήναν ἔπος ὅμως τόκον κόπου

Again mixing together the letters of the third set of verses I make the word Athene nevertheless the reward of my toil.

## 3. Oedipus Tyrannus :

ὁμοῦ δὲ παιάνων τε καὶ στεναγμάτων  
ἀγὼ δικαίων μὴ παρ' ἀγγέλων τέκνα

Solution :

ἐκ τῶνδ' ἀπάντων καταμεμιγμένων ἐπῶν  
ἀγλαὰ γέ τιν' ἀγαυ' αἰὼ Διὸς Κόρη

Out of all these words mixed together I hear some that are majestic, glorious : Daughter of Zeus !

## 4. Oedipus at Kolonos :

σμικρὸν μὲν ἐξαιτοῦντα τοῦ σμικροῦ δ' ἔτι  
μεῖον φέροντα καὶ τόδ' ἐξαρκοῦν ἐμοί

Solution :

ἀμοὶ μέμικται νέμ' ἀναμίξ, ἔξευρε δ' οὐ  
Κρονίου Κρατίστου φέρτατον τέκνον Διός

Rearrange by mixing what has been mixed by me, but find out where is

Best Child of greatest Zeus, son of Kronos.

## 5. Elektra :

τῆς οἰστροπλήγος ἄλσος Ἰνάχου κόρης  
αὕτη δ' Ὀρέστα τοῦ λυκοκτόνου θεοῦ

Solution :

ἄκου' ἔπος λόγου τρίτου χρέος. σὺ τὸν  
ἄλλασσ'. Ἀθήνη τοῦ Διὸς κόρη τόκος

*Hear a word which concerns the third utterance. Shift it ;  
Athene daughter of Zeus is the result.*

6. Trachiniae :

ἔξοιδ' ἔχουσα δυστυχῇ τε καὶ βαρύν  
ἦτις πατρὸς μὲν ἐν δόμοισιν Οἰνέως

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἰάμβου δ' εὖ τρίτου νέμ', ὧν ἔπη  
Διὸς Κόρην ἄνασσαν ἐξέδου στίχος

*Arrange carefully the letters of the third iambic, whose  
words " the Queen Daughter of Zeus " have been put off  
by the line.*

7. Philoktetes (lines 6 and 7) :

ταχθεῖς τόδ' ἔρδειν τῶν ἀνασσόντων ὑπο  
νόσω καταστάζοντα διαβόρωι πόδα

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἅπαντα τῶν τρίτων δ' ἴσαζ' ἐπῶν  
σέβω δ' Ἀθάναν Διὸς ὅδ' ἄρα τόκου τόνος

*Adjust all the letters of the third set of verses ;  
I worship Athene, Daughter of Zeus—this is the drift of  
the result.*

#### ASCRPTIONS OF EURIPIDES

These vary very little from those which have been solved.

1. Helene :

Φάρον μὲν οἰκῶν νῆσον Αἰγύπτου δ' ἄναξ  
ὅς τῶν κατ' οἶδμα παρθένων μίαν γαμεῖ

Solution :

κόρην τ' Ἀθαναίαν Διὸς φῦσαν μόνου  
τῶνδ' ἔξ ἐπαινω γραμμάτων κάμοιν γ' ἐποῖν

*And I praise the Virgin Athene born of Zeus only  
Out of these letters and my two verses.*

2. Kyklops :

ἔπειτά γ' ἀμφὶ γηγενῇ μάχην δορὸς  
ἐνδέξιός σῶι ποδὶ παρασπιστῆς γεγώς

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν στρέφ', ἣν γ' ὅπη Διὸς Διός  
δῖς, ἣ γεγῶσα παῖς ἅπαξ γεγραμμένη

*Shift the letters of the words, wherein " of Zeus " " of  
Zeus "*

*Was written twice, " The daughter born " once.*

3. Alkestis :

οὐδὲν χολωθείς τέκτονας Δίου πυρὸς  
κτείνω Κύκλωπας καὶ με θητεύειν πατήρ

Solution :

σὺ δ' ἐπῶν τρίτων στοιχεῖ' ὁμοῦ κύκα. τύπωι  
Διὸς κέκευθε Παλλάς ἔτ' Ἀθήνη κόρη

*Do you now mix together the letters of the third lines. In  
the writing*

*There lie hidden " of Zeus," " Pallas," and " Athene  
daughter."*

4. Medea :

ἀνδρῶν ἀριστέων οἳ τὸ πάγχρυσον δέρος  
Πελίαι μετῆλθον οὐ γὰρ ἂν δέσποιν' ἐμή

*ἀριστέων* is Wakefield's emendation for *ἀρίστων*. There  
can be little doubt of its correctness.

Solution.

ὦ τοῖνδ' ἐποῖν στοιχεῖ' ὄρων γεγραμμένα  
 πάρευρ' Ἀθήνην Παλλάδ' ἔρνος τοῦ Διός  
*O you who see the letters of this couplet written*  
*Discover Athene Pallas scion of Zeus.*

5. Heraklidae :

αὐτῶι δ' ἄριστος οἶδα δ' οὐ λόγῳ μαθῶν  
 ἐγὼ γὰρ αἰδοῖ καὶ τὸ συγγενές σέβων

Solution :

ἔδέου δ' ἰάμβῳ γ' ὥς λόγους αὖ δῶ τρίτῳ ;  
 ὅσ' ἐῷ γ' Ἀθὰνα γίγνεται κἄρνος Διός  
*And did you beg me to give words to the third iambic too ?*  
*Those words which I grant become Athene and Scion of Zeus*

6. Hippolytus :

τοὺς μὲν σέβοντας τὰμὰ πρεσβεύω κράτη  
 σφάλλῳ δ' ὅσοι φρονοῦσιν εἰς ἡμᾶς μέγα

Solution :

τρίτου δ' ἰάμβου σοφὲ σὺ γράμματ' ἔφες ἐνῆν  
 σέβομέν σ' ἄνασσ' ὦ Παλλὰς ὦ Διὸς κόρη  
*And you, expert, apply the letters of the third iambic ;*  
*they contain*  
*We worship thee, O Pallas, O Daughter of Zeus.*

7. Andromache :

ζηλωτὸς ἔν γε τῶι πρὶν Ἀνδρομάχῃ χρόνῳ  
 νῦν δ' εἴ τις ἄλλη δυστυχεστάτῃ γυνή

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἴσαζ' ἤδη λόγων τρίτων. τυχῶν  
 τὴν Παλλάδ' εὗρες ; χρή με νῦν γ' αὖ τὴν Διός  
*Adjust now the letters of the third utterances. Have you*  
*by good fortune found Pallas ? I ought then to find too*  
*Daughter of Zeus.*

## 7. Hekabe :

κίνδυνος ἔσχε δορὶ πεσεῖν Ἑλληνικῶι  
 δείσας ὑπεξέπεμψε Τρωικῆς χθονός

## Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἐμῶν λῶ' ἐξ ἐπῶν. σκέψει Διός  
 πρέπεις, Ἀθήνη δ' ἔσχε δύσκολον κρίσιν

*Set free the letters from my words. You "of Zeus" are conspicuous to the view ; but "Athene" was hard to distinguish.*

## 9. Supplices :

ἐν ἧι με θρέψας ὀλβίοις ἐν δώμασιν  
 Αἴθραν πατὴρ δίδωσι τῶι Πανδίωνος

## Solution.

ἴδρις δ' ἰάμβων ὅς τρίτων εἰρημένων  
 Πολιάς Ἀθάνα θ' ἥδ' ἐνόψει παῖς Διός

*And you who are acquainted with the third iambs, when they are uttered will see therein Polias (City-goddess) and Here is Athene, Daughter of Zeus.*

## 10. The Mad Herakles :

σπαρτῶν στάχυσ ἔβλασταν ὦν γένους Ἀρης  
 ἔσωσ' ἀριθμὸν ὀλίγον οἷ Κάδμου πόλιν

## Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἰάμβων νῦν γ' ἐμῶν ἄλλασσε σοὺς  
 λόγους τ' Ἀθάναν προστρέπω κόρην Διός

*Now change the letters of my iambs for your own words  
 I supplicate Athene, Daughter of Zeus.*

## 11. Ion :

ἦκω δὲ Δελφῶν τήνδε γῆν ἔν' ὀμφαλὸν  
 μέσον καθίζων Φοῖβος ὑμνωιδεῖ βροτοῖς



Solution :

λόγον στρέφ', ὦ φίλ'. ἔκ μ' ἰάμβοιν τοῖνδ' ἰδὼν  
εἶφ' ὦδ' Ἀθήνην δ' ἐκ μόνου Ζηνὸς σέβω

*Shift the sentence, my friend ; and seeing me out of this  
iambic couplet*

*Say thus : I worship Athene, born of Zeus alone.*

Murray records an elegant emendation, which we now see the reason for rejecting.

12. Troiades :

Φοῖβός γε καὶ γὰρ λαίνους πύργους πέριξ  
ὀρθοῖσιν ἔθεμεν κανόσιν οὐ ποτ' ἐκ φρενῶν

Solution :

κόπον ἐξ ἐποῖν πρὶν στρεφομένοιιν φέρων γ', ἔθι  
σέβω σ' Ἀθὰνα κυρίου γ' ἐλοῦ τόκους

*If you first endure the trouble of shifting the couplet, come  
Choose as your lawful reward : I worship thee, Athene.*

13. Elektra :

Πρίαμον ἐλών τε Δαρδάνου κλεινὴν πόλιν  
ἀφίκετ' ἐς τόδ' Ἄργος ὑψηλῶν δ' ἐπὶ

Solution :

ἐμοῦ δ' ἐπῶν κρῖνον γραφήν. κόρην Διὸς  
ὄψει τελευτῶν τις πάλιν δὲ Παλλάδα

*Interrogate now the writing of my verses. You, whoever  
you may be, will finally see Daughter of Zeus and again  
Pallas.*

14. Iphigeneia in Tauri :

τῆς Τυνδαρείας θυγατρὸς Ἰφιγένεια παῖς  
ἦν ἀμφὶ δίναις ἄς θάμ' Εὐριπος πυκναῖς

Solution :

σὺ νῦν γ' ἔπη στρέφ' ἂν τρίταις γραμμαῖς ὑφ' αἷς  
κεῖθει ποίησις παῖδ' Ἀθαναίαν Διὸς

*Do you now twist the words which are in the third lines,  
beneath which the poetry conceals Athene, daughter of Zeus.*

15. Phoenissae :

ἀκτῖν' ἀφῆκας Κάδμος ἡνίκ' ἦλθε γῆν  
τῆνδ' ἐκλιπὼν Φοίνισσαν ἐναλίαν χθόνα

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἴθ' ἄλλασσ' ἀνδικ' ἦν κἀφῆκ' ὅπιν  
φανῶν γ' Ἀθάναν τὴν Διὸς κεκλημένην

*Come shift the letters which were dutiful, but put off piety ;  
to display : Athene, called of Zeus.*

16. Orestes :

Διὸς πεφυκὼς ὡς λέγουσι Τάνταλος  
κορυφῆς ὑπερτέλλοντα δειμαίνων πέτραν

Solution :

ἔτ' ἐποῦν τρίτοιν ἐμὼ γράφ' ἀλλάσσων σύ που  
νῦν τῷδ' ἔφυσ τε Παλλὰς ἐκ Διὸς κόρη

*Next do you write somewhere in lieu of the third couplet the  
present couplet of mine ; with the words Pallas, Virgin,  
thou wast born of Zeus.*

17. Bacchae :

πάρειμι Δίρκης νάματ' Ἰσμηνοῦ θ' ὕδωρ  
ὄρῳ δὲ μητρὸς μνήμα τῆς κεραυνίας

Solution :

μίμημι' ἐπὼν δῆτ' αὖ τρίτων ῥῆμι' εὖρ' ὃ δρᾷ  
μέμνησ' Ἀθάνας κυρίας Διὸς κόρης

*Find again an utterance which will imitate the third verses  
Remember Athene, the Queen, Daughter of Zeus.*

18. Iphigeneia in Aulis :

δειναὶ δ' ἀπειλαὶ καὶ κατ' ἀλλήλων φόνος  
ξυνίσταθ' ὅστις μὴ λάβοι τὴν παρθένον

Solution :

καὶ τρίτον ἴθ' ἄλλασσ' ἐξ ἱαμβείων ἐποῖν  
Παλλάδ' ὅτ' Ἀθήνην τὴν Διὸς φῦσαν καλῶ

*And come shift for a third time out of an iambic couplet  
When I call on Pallas Athene, born of Zeus.*

19. Rhesos (lines 56 and 57) :

ὦ δαῖμον ὅστις μ' εὐτυχοῦντ' ἐνόσφισας  
θοίνης λέοντα πρὶν τὸν Ἀργείων στρατόν

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἐποῖν τρίτοις σὺ νῦν λύσας μέτρων  
τότ' ὄνομ' Ἀθήνας τῆς Διὸς νοῶν γράφε

*Releasing the letters of the third couplet from metre  
Then noticing the name of Athene, Daughter of Zeus,  
write it.*

The same argument may be based on these Ascriptions as on the Admonitions. It should not be denied that in any casual couplet the names Athene, Daughter of Zeus, or Pallas might be found ; but that any *third couplet* could without the author's intention be capable of being so rearranged as to give the words *if you shift the letters of the third couplet you will find the name of Athene etc.*, may be denied. The arrangement even if it gave that would also give certain letters with which nothing could be done. But in the Ascriptions we find the *third couplet* with the direction to shift the letters and obtain the reward as frequently as in the Admonitions we find the warning not to shift the letters of the fourth couplet as there will be no reward. Either then we have cipher here or no such thing as cipher exists.

We proceed to the Chronograms. The fact of their existence was learned, as has been stated, from the Signature of the Agamemnon, which runs as follows :

θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαγὴν πόνων

φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος ἦν κοιμώμενος

These lines have been repeatedly emended, but the difficulty of making the watchman "sleep" watch instead of "keeping it" cannot be eluded ; if he slept he had nothing to complain of. Nor is the syntax of the second line easily defensible. The Signature accounts for these peculiarities :

Solution :

ὃς ἐμῶν ὅπη δὴ γράμματ' ἀλλάσσω ἐπῶν

νέμ' ἔθηκας υἱὸν Εὐφορίωνος Ἀττικόν

*You who by shifting the letters of my words somehow or other have written*

*Read Son of Euphorion Athenian*

a sentence which implies that there is something to follow ; and what follows :

στέγαις Ἀτρείδων ἄγκαθεν κυνὸς δίκην

ἄστρον κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὁμήγυριν

being admittedly obscure must harbour a puzzle. Its Solution is :

κρίνας σὺ νῦν γ' εὖρ' ὀγδοήκοντ' ἐκ κριτῶν

τραγωιδίας τ' αἰῶνα τῆσδ' ἐκμάνθανε

*Do you now pick EIGHTY out of picked words, and make out the age of this Tragedy.*

Since this drama was acted in the eightieth Olympiad, this is clearly a case of dating by Olympiads, which is indeed surprising. We find however by examination that the second iambic couplet of every tragedy down

to the very latest is a chronogram of the same sort. The latest is that of the Archelaos of Nikostratos :

ὅς ἐκ μελαμβρότοιο πληροῦται ῥοὰς  
Αἰθιοπίδος γῆς ἡνίκ' ἄν τακῇ χιῶν

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἰάμβοιν ἄθλ' ὄρω σ' αἰῶν' ὄρων  
ἦδ' ἡ 'κατοστή πη κέκραγ' 'Ολυμπιάς

*Letters of the couplet, I see your prize when I see the date ;  
This is most likely, I cry, the hundredth Olympiad.*

The Chronograms of Euripides have been solved in a separate monograph. Leaving it to others (or to another occasion) to correct any errors in that first attempt, we may now collect those of Aeschylus and Sophokles.

#### CHRONOGRAMS OF AESCHYLUS

##### 2. Supplices (lines 178, 179) :

καὶ τὰπὶ χέρσου νῦν προμήθειαν λαβεῖν  
αἰνῶ φυλάξαι τᾶμ' ἔπη δελτουμένης

These lines have been variously emended.

Solution :

αἰῶνα φαίνειν μάθ' ἐνυπαλλάξας ἔπη  
χεῦρ' ἐβδομήκοντα σὺν 'Ολύμπι' ἔτι τρία

*Learn to show the date by substituting words within the line,  
And find with seventy a further three Olympiads.*

##### 3. Persae (lines 178, 179) :

Ἰαόνων γῆν οἷχεται πέρσαι θέλων  
ἀλλ' οὔτι που τοιόνδ' ἐναργὲς εἰδόμην

Solution :

αἰῶ δ' 'Ολύμπι' ἦν γε πέντ' ἄρας τιθῶ  
ἐννεάδας ἐννέ' οἱ χρόνοι δῆλοι λόγῳ

*And if I make the date nine enneads subtracting five Olympiads, the times will be made clear by that sentence.*

αιῶ for αιῶνα is noticed as an Aeschylean form in Bekker's *Anecdota*, 363, 17. The Greek cardinals after twenty being rather awkward words ingenious reckonings are used in the Chronograms. The date Ol. 76 is otherwise attested for this drama.

4. Septem contra Thebas :

οἴακα νομῶν βλέφαρα μὴ κοιμῶν ὕπνῳ  
εἰ μὲν γὰρ εὖ πράξαιμεν αἰτία θεοῦ

Solution :

αιῶν' ἀμαυρῶι που γράφ' ἱαμβεῖῳ μέτρῳ  
'Ολύμπι' ἐξήκονθ' ἄμ' ἐννέα κἀννέα

*Write the age in a faint sort of iambic metre ;  
Sixty Olympiads with nine and nine.*

*I.e., Ol. 78. The anapaests require this apology.*

5. Prometheus :

Ἡφαιστε σοὶ δὲ χρὴ μέλειν ἐπιστολὰς  
ἄς σοι πατὴρ ἐφείτο τόνδε πρὸς πέτραις

Solution :

ἄλλασσ' ἐμὰ στοιχεῖ' ὅπη σόφ' (ἡ φρονεῖς ;)  
ἔτη τριάδε δις πέντ' ἐρεῖ πρὸς ἐπτάσι

*Shift my letters in such wise—do you understand, expert ?  
that they will say : the date is two triads in addition to  
twice five heptads.*

The sum is 76.

6. Choephoroe :

ἦκω γὰρ ἐς γῆν τήνδε καὶ κατέρχομαι  
τύμβου δ' ἐπ' ὄχθῳι τῶιδε κηρύσσω πατρί



Solution :

κρύπτων τάχ' αἰῶ τῇσδε τῆς τραγωιδίας  
κέχρημ' ἰάμβου κῶγδόηκονθ' εὖρ' ἔπει

*Possibly I want the iambic to conceal the age of this Tragedy;  
and find Eighty in the verse.*

This sounds very like an anticipatory answer to the criticism of Aristophanes wherein the tautology *I have come and am returning* is rightly reprehended. Possibly, says the author, I want the line for a chronogram ; and indeed it does contain the word *Eighty*.

7. Eumenides :

ἦ δὴ τὸ μητρὸς δευτέρα τόδ' ἔζετο  
μαντεῖον ὡς λόγος τις ἐν δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ

Solution :

ἔτη δ' ἐμοὶ ζητεῖς ὅς ὁμολογῶ τὸ δὴ  
δυοῖν τριῶν τε τετράς ἐστι τετραδῶν

*And to you who want to know my date, I make this  
confession :*

*It is a tetrad of two and three tetrads.*

The sum comes to eighty.

CHRONOGRAMS OF SOPHOKLES

I. Aias :

καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ σκηναῖς σε ναυτικάῃς ὀρῶ  
Αἴαντος ἔνθα τάξιν ἐσχάτην ἔχει

Solution :

στοιχεῖά τ' ἰσάσας νῦν σὺ κρῖν' αἰῶνά πη  
ἐκεῖσ' ἴθ'· ἐνενήκοντα χαῖ' ἕα τινά

*And now equalizing the letters find out the date somewhere.*

*Take the following line : ninety, and omit some six.*

The date is then Ol. 84.

## 2. Antigone :

ὅποῖον οὐχὶ νῶιν ἔτι ζῶσαιν τελεῖ  
οὐδὲν γὰρ οὔτ' ἀλγεινὸν οὔτ' ἄτης ἄτερ

The sacrifices made to the Chronogram are somewhat excessive.

Solution :

τούτου λόγου στοιχεῖ' ὅλα ζητῶν νοοῦ  
τραγωιδίαι τρί' ἐννεάσιν ἐπ' ἐννέα

*Searching all the letters of this utterance, notice :*

*The Tragedy has three over nine times nine.*

*I.e., is dated Ol. 84.*

## 3. Oedipus Tyrannus :

ἱκτηρίοις κλάδοισιν ἐξεστεμμένοι  
πόλις δ' ὁμοῦ μὲν θυμιαμάτων γέμει

Solution :

ἴθ' ἔς τι κλέμμα τοῖσδ' ἑμοῖσι γράμμασι  
ἔξω δυοῖν 'Ολύμπι' ἐνενήκοντ' ἑμοί

*Come to a puzzle with these letters of mine :*

*I have ninety Olympiads save two.*

Date Ol. 88.

## 4. Oedipus at Kolonos :

τίς τὸν πλανήτην Οἰδίπουν καθ' ἡμέραν  
τὴν νῦν σπανιστοῖς δέξεται δωρήμασιν

Solution :

τίς θ' ἡμῖν αἰὼν νῦν δίδαξαι δὴ ποτ' ἦν  
τά τ' 'Ολύμπι' ἐνενήκοντα πρὸς τέσσαρσιν ἦν

*Now teach yourself what may have been our age, and the Olympiads ; they were ninety-four.*

The tradition asserts that this drama was produced in Ol. 94,3, four years after the death of Sophokles, by

his grandson. The language of the text indicates the puzzle ; for *σπανιστοῖς* appears to have been invented for its sake, and is not apparently used by any other classic. The Chronogram is evidently the work of the grandson, since the author would not himself antedate the drama by a whole Olympiad.

5. Elektra :

παρόντι λεύσσειν ὦν πρόθυμος ἦσθ' αἰεί  
τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν "Αργος οὐπόθεις τόδε

Solution :

ὀρθοῖς ὅπη θῶ τάδε λόγοις 'Ολύμπια  
προσθοῦ τὰ τρία σύ γ' ἐννεάσι πρὸς ἐννέα

*In straightforward language, wherein let me put this.  
Do you add three Olympiads to nine enneads.*

Date Ol. 84.

6. Trachiniae :

θάνηι τις οὔτ' εἰ χρηστὸς οὔτ' εἴ τωι κακός  
ἐγὼ δὲ τὸν ἐμὸν καὶ πρὶν εἰς "Αιδου μολεῖν

Solution :

στοιχεῖα κίνει δευτέροις ἦι δεῖ ῥυθμοῖς  
τότ' 'Ολύμπι' ἐνενηκοστὰ τόκος αἰῶν ἄγων

*Move the letters in the second rhythms in the right way ;  
Then the result is an age keeping the ninetieth Olympiad.*

7. Philoktetes (lines 4 and 5) :

'Αχιλλέως παῖ Νεοπτόλεμε τὸν Μηλιᾷ  
Ποίαντος υἱὸν ἐξέθηκ' ἐγὼ ποτε

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν ἕα ποθ' ἀλλάξας ὅποι  
'Ολύμπι' ἐνενήκοντ' ἔμοιγ' ἔτη τελῶ

## 36 CHRONOGRAMS OF MINOR DRAMATISTS

*You who may at some time shift the letters leave them in the position wherein I count my years as ninety Olympiads.*

### CHRONOGRAMS OF MINOR DRAMATISTS

We may conclude this collection with the Chronogram of the spurious prologue to the Rhesos by Zenokrates :

μέλλειν Ἀχαιῶν ὠφελεῖν στρατεύματα  
νῦν γὰρ κακῶς πράσσουσιν ἐν μάχῃ δορός

Solution :

στοιχεῖα γραμμῶν δευτέρων ἄλλασσε νῦν·  
καίων' ἔχρησ' Ὀλύμπι' ἑκατὸν ἂν φράσαις

*Now shift the letters of the second lines :*

*They prophesy the date : you would say it was a hundred Olympiads.*

The genuine prologue is earlier by seven Olympiads :

λαθόντες ὄμμα τοῦμόν αἵρεσθαι φυγὴν  
μέλλουσι σαίνει μ' ἔννυχος φρυκτωρία

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἄμ' ἀλλάσσω λόγου μιμοῦ ρυθμόν·  
ἴθ' εὖρ' ἄμ' ἐνενήκοντ' ἔφυ φασὶν τριάς

*While shifting the letters imitate the rhythm of the utterance :*

*Come, find : With ninety, they say, there was a triad.*

Date Ol. 93.

We now come to the first couplets, often in these Signatures called ἄκρω ἔπη "the topmost pair." The best Signature is doubtless that which gives name, patronymic and name of country ; but when authors become famous less than that is sufficient. "The Bard

of Avon " would be sufficient for England's greatest dramatist ; there have been times when " the Dean " would be sufficient for a signature ; and the proximity of the chronogram would take away all ambiguity. The author of the Hymn to Apollo signs himself " a blind man who dwells in Chios " ; it was probably understood by his contemporaries, though we do not know who is meant.

It is however unnecessary to argue that the Signature must exist after the evidence that has been produced with regard to the three remaining couplets. In this case it will be desirable to solve all those of Aeschylus and Sophokles, and then give specimens of the different signatures adopted by Euripides.

## SIGNATURES OF AESCHYLUS

## 1. Supplices :

παῖδες φρονεῖν χρή, ξὺν φρονοῦντι δ' ἵκετε  
πιστῶι γέροντι τῶιδε ναυκλήρῳι πατρί

Solution :

πρώτην γραφήν δ' ἔξευρ' ἰδὼν τρί' εἰ πρόπει  
τίν' ; Εὐφορίωνος κ' Αἰσχύλον. τί δ' ; Ἀττικόν  
*Looking at the first script discover if three words stand out.  
What are they ? Euphorion's and Aeschylus. And what ?  
Athenian.*

Porson was the greatest of Greek scholars, but his little alteration of ἵκετε to ἦκετε would have spoiled this signature.

## 2. Persae :

πολλοῖς μὲν αἰεὶ νυκτέροις ὀνειράσιν  
ξύνειμ' ἀφ' οὐπερ παῖς ἐμὸς στείλας στρατόν

Solution :

παῖς Εὐφορίονος Ἀττικὸς Ἐλευσίνιος  
εἴραντ' ὀνόμασι ξύμμετρ' ἀλλάσσειν πρέπει

*You should string together Son of Euphorion Athenian of Eleusis and substitute these words for the corresponding measures.*

The substitution of ἰονος for ἰωνος is in accordance with Homeric usage. For the rhythm see Eur. El. 314.

3. Septem contra Thebas :

Κάδμου πολῖται χρὴ λέγειν τὰ καίρια  
ὅστις φυλάσσει πρᾶγος ἐν πρύμνῃ πόλεως

Solution :

ἐποῖν λέγ' ἄκροιν γράμματ' ἀλλάσσω φρεσί  
ἧδ' Αἰσχύλου ποίησις Ἀττικοῦ πρέπει

*Say to yourself, shifting the letters of the topmost couplet ; This is evidently the poetry of the Athenian Aeschylus.*

And indeed the stern does not appear to be the proper place in the vessel for the look-out man.

4. Prometheus :

χθονὸς μὲν ἐς τήλουρον ἤκομεν πέδον  
Σκύθην ἐς οἶμον ἄβατον εἰς ἐρημίαν .

How the wilderness could be untrodden when it was the path of the Scythians is far from clear. Only the Signature can explain this, which is :

νέμε τὸν ἱαμβὸν ὃν προεῖρηκεν νόμος  
ἐμὸς δ' Ἀθήνηθεν τοκεὺς ἦν Αἰσχύλος.

*Read the iambic which the law has prescribed ; Now Aeschylus from Athens was my parent.*



## 5. Agamemnon.

θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαγὴν πόνων  
φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος ἦν κοιμώμενος

Solution :

ὃς ἐμῶν ὅπη δὴ γράμματ' ἀλλάσσων ἐπῶν  
νέμ' ἔθηκας υἱὸν Εὐφορίωνος Ἀττικόν

*You who by shifting the letters of my words somehow or other have written : Read son of Euphorion Athenian.*

The sequel is the Chronogram, where the "picking out of picked words" is contrasted with the "somehow or other" here.

## 6. Choephoroe :

Ἐρμῇ χθόνιε πατρῷι' ἐποπτεύων κράτη  
σωτήρ γενοῦ μοι ξύμμαχος τ' αἰτουμένωι

Solution :

πρῶτων ἐπῶν σύ γ' ἦν ὕπο στοιχεῖ' ἔρηι  
Μαραθωνομάχου ἕρεεῖ με τὸ τμῆμ' Ἀττικοῦ

*If you ask the letters which underlie the first verses, the section will say that I am by an Athenian Marathon-fighter.*

## 7. Eumenides :

πρῶτον μὲν εὐχῇι τῇιδε πρεσβεύω θεῶν  
τὴν πρωτόμαντιν γαῖαν ἐκ δὲ τῆς θέμιν

Solution.

πρῶτων ἰάμβων δευτέρων τ' Εὐπατρίδην  
νέμε μίκτ' Ἀθήνηθεν γένος στοιχεῖ' ἔπη

*Read the letters of the first and second iambics after mixing as the words an Eupatrid of Athens by race.*

It will appear from a comparison of these Signatures with the Greek life of the poet that most of what was known of him was contained in the Signatures.

## SIGNATURES OF SOPHOKLES

## 1. Aias :

ἀεὶ μὲν ὦ παῖ Λαρτίου δέδορκά σε  
 πεῖράν τιν' ἐχθρῶν ἀρπάσαι θηρώμενον

## Solution :

ἐμῶν ἐρεῖ στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν (ἔνραπτ' ἴδρις)  
 δρᾶμ' ἄρ' Ἀθηναίου Κολωνῆθεν πάρα

*The letters of my verses will say : stitch them in, expert ;  
 Here then is a drama by an Athenian from Kolonos.*

## 2. Antigone :

ὦ κοινὸν αὐτάδελφον Ἰσμῆνης κára  
 ἄρ' οἴσθ' ὅτι Ζεὺς τῶν ἀπ' Οἰδίου κακῶν

*These lines are quite sacrificed to the Signature.*

## Solution :

τᾶπη δ' ἰσάζων καὶ κυκῶν ρίπτοις ἵνα  
 τὸ δρᾶμ' Ἀθηναίου Σοφοκλέους νοῶν

*In the process of equalizing and mixing the words when you  
 perceive where is " the drama is by the Athenian Sophokles "*  
*you had better throw them away.*

## 3. Oedipus Tyrannus :

ὦ τέκνα Κάδμου τοῦ πάλαι νέα τροφή  
 τίνας ποθ' ἔδρας τάσδε μοι θαάζετε

*The final verb is wholly unsuitable. It is required by  
 the Signature.*

## Solution :

τᾶπη δ' ἴσαζε πάντα τᾶμ' ἔκ θ' ὧν τόδε  
 τὸ δρᾶμ' Ἀθηναίου Σοφοκλέους τ' ἐρεῖ

*Equalize all my words and those out of which the following  
 will say*

*This drama is by an Athenian and Sophokles.*

## 4. Oedipus at Kolonos :

τέκνον τυφλοῦ γέροντος Ἀντιγόνη τίνας  
 χώρους ἀφίγμεθ' ἢ τίνων ἀνδρῶν πόλιν

Solution :

ῥωννύντι τὴν γραφὴν τὸ νῦν στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν  
 Σοφοκλέους τι δραμάτων γίγνονθ' ὅλα

*To one who strengthens the writing the letters of the words  
 become now altogether : A drama of Sophokles.*

This suggests a practice of marking in some way the letters in the Signature which contain the means of identifying the author.

## 5. Elektra :

ὦ τοῦ στρατηγήσαντος ἐν Τροίαι ποτὲ  
 Ἀγαμέμνονος παῖ νῦν ἐκεῖν' ἔξεστί σοι

Solution :

τούτοις ἔα σὺν γράμματ' ἐννέ' ἐξ ἐποῖν  
 ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΣ εἴας' Ἀπτικοῖς ποιήσεως

*Of this couplet leave you nine letters : STRATEGOS ;  
 I have left " to the Athenians of poetry."*

Sophokles filled the office of Strategos, and this is a sufficient identification.

## 6. Trachiniae :

λόγος τίς ἐστ' ἀρχαῖος ἀνθρώπων φανείς  
 ὥς οὐκ ἂν αἰῶν' ἐκμάθοις βροτῶν πρὶν ἂν

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἰάμβων κρῖνε πρώτων γ' ὥς πάρος  
 ἰσάσας τ' Ἀθναῖον Σοφοκλέα νῦν θ' ὁρῶν

*Interrogate the letters of the first iambs, as before when  
 you have equalized Athenian Sophokles which you now  
 see.*

## 7. Philoktetes :

In this drama, as has been seen, the Signature occupies three lines. The first two are :

ἔπους ἄκρου δὴ ῥῆμ' ὅλου 'τέτμητό πη  
σύ τ' ἱαμβικὸν τόνδ' ὀρθὸν εὐρήσεις στίχον

*The matter had somehow got cut away from the whole of the first verse, and you will find this correct iambic line :*

ἔνθ' ὧ κρατίστου πατρὸς 'Ελλήνων τραφεῖς

Solution :

τρί' ἐρῶ τελῶν νῦν· Σοφοκλέης 'Ατθὶς πάτρα

*I will in conclusion say three things : Sophokles, Attica fatherland.*

These lines give us a glimpse into the Poet's workshop, but it does not enable us to see much of the operation. Since however in what follows the third and fourth couplets are quoted by their numbers, it would seem that the original intention had been to have the Signature as usual in the first couplet ; the Poet having for some reason decided to prefix three lines to the Chronogram, he introduces this apology for his divergence from the usual practice.

## SIGNATURES OF EURIPIDES

These may be divided into five classes, of which specimens only need be given.

I. Signature *Euripides, Athenian* :—

Hekabe :

ἦκω νεκρῶν κευθμῶνα καὶ σκότους πύλας  
λιπὼν ἰν' "Αιδης χωρὶς οἴκισται θεῶν

See Murray's note for the reading σκότους.

The solution is :

ἄλλασσ' ἄκρων στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν κῖσθ' ᾧ νόμωι·  
κυκῶν Ἀθηναῖος, κυκῶν τ' Εὐριπίδης.

*Shift the letters of the topmost verses, and know by what rule :*

*Mixing "Athenian" and mixing "Euripides."*

Medea :

εἴθ' ὥφελ' Ἀργοῦς μὴ διαπτάσθαι σκάφος  
Κόλχων ἐς αἶαν κυανέας συμπληγάδας

One would have fancied the Argo made this voyage on her way from Kolchis rather than to it. The solution is :

ἄλλασσ' ἅμα στοιχεῖ' ἐπῶν κλαγγὰς δ' ἅμα·  
φάσκουσ' Ἀθήνηθεν σαφῶς κ' Εὐριπίδου

*Shift at once the letters and the sounds of the words ;  
They say clearly Of Athens and By Euripides.*

Helene :

Νείλου μὲν αἶδε καλλιπάρθενοι ῥοαί,  
ὃς ἀντὶ Δίας ψεκάδος Αἰγύπτου πέδον

Here the adjective applied to the Nile's streams is far from easy, and the form ψεκάδος is altered by the editors to ψακάδος. The solution is

ἄλλασσ' ἐποῖν ἄκροιν νέοιν ἅπανθ' ὅσα·  
Εὐριπίδου δ' ὄψει· λέγει δ' ἅμ' Ἀττικοῦ

*Shift all the letters that belong to the new topmost couplet ;  
And you will see By Euripides ; and it adds The Athenian.*

Supplices :

Δήμητερ ἐστιοῦχ' Ἐλευσίνος χθονός  
τῆσδ' οἷ τε ναοὺς ἔχετε πρόσπολοι θεᾶς

Did this goddess really have male attendants ? And can Eleusis be called a land ? The Signature is :

ἡλλασσες ὃς στοιχεῖ' ἔμ', ὅρον ἔχε στόχου·

Εὐριπίδου τόδ' ἐστ' Ἀθήνηθεν τ' ἔπος

*You who have been shifting my letters, have the limit to conjecturing ;*

*This is the utterance of Euripides and from Athens.*

Iphigeneia in Aulis :

ἐγένοντο Λήδαι Θεστιάδι τρεῖς παρθένοι

Φοίβη Κλυταιμνήστρα τ' ἐμὴ ξυνάορος

Phoebe appears to owe her existence to the needs of the Signature ; and the ancestor or ancestress of Leda may be in the same case. It is to be read :

Εὐριπίδης θ' εὐρὲ τό τ' Ἀθηναῖος. στροφή

τοῖνδ' ἐστ' ἰάμβοιν ἐξ ἄκροιν τ' ἡλλαγμένα

*Find Euripides and the word Athenian. They are a transformation*

*Of these two Iambics, and altered from the two topmost.*

Orestes :

οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν δεινὸν ᾧδ' εἰπεῖν ἔπος

οὐδὲ πάθος οὐδὲ συμφορὰν θεήλατον

The accusatives in the second line have been altered to nominatives owing to the difficulty of the construction, which is due to the needs of the Signature ; this is :

ἐνόν, σοφῶι τόδ' εὐπετὲς δ', ἔλαυν' ἔπος

ἐνδον δ' Ἀθηναίου θὲς ὄνομ' Εὐριπίδου

*Drive away—this is easy for an ingenious person—the verse that is in the place ; and set within the name of the Athenian Euripides.*

Bacchae :

ἦκω Διὸς παῖς τήνδε Θηβαίων χθόνα

Διόνυσος ὃν τίκτει ποθ' ἡ Κάδμου κόρη



Θηβαίων is altered by many into Θηβαίαν. The reason for the former is to be found in the Signature :

στοιχεῖ ἰάμβων τῶνδ' Ἀθηναῖός θ' ὁ δούς  
Εὐριπίδης κόπον καθῆκ' ἤδη τόκον

*The letters of these iambs and the Athenian Euripides who gave the trouble has now paid the interest.*

Andromache :

Ἀσιατίδος γῆς σχῆμα Θηβαία πτόλι  
ὅθεν ποθ' ἔδνων σὺν πολυχρύσῳ χλιδῇ

Here the τ of πτόλι must be required for the Signature ; it is sacrificing rather too much to make Thebes the pride of Asia ! Here is the cause of the sacrifice :

στοιχεῖ ἰάμβων τῶνδ' Ἀθηναῖός ποθ' ᾧ  
Εὐριπίδης σὺν γ' ἴσχ', ὑπελλάχθη δ' ὅλος

*The letters of these iambs are those which once held "Athenian" with "Euripides" ; but he has been entirely changed.*

## 2. The Signature Euripides :—

Heraklidae :

πάλαι ποτ' ἐστὶ τοῦτ' ἐμοὶ δεδογμένον  
ὁ μὲν δίκαιος τοῖς πέλας πέφυκ' ἀνὴρ

These lines are scarcely to be outdone for pointlessness. The Signature is adequate :

ἄλλασσ' ἐποῖν τοῖνδ' ὀνόματ', ἔκτεμ' ἔκτοπα·  
ὁ μοι δ' ἔφν γ' Εὐριπίδην ἐπίστασο

*Shift the words (names) of these two lines, cut out those that are out of place ; and understand that mine is Euripides.*

3. The signature Athenian, son of Euripos :  
The Mad Herakles :

τίς τὸν Διὸς σύλλεκτρον οὐκ οἶδεν βροτῶν  
'Αργεῖον 'Αμφιτρύων' ὃν 'Αλκαῖός ποτε

The Argive origin of Amphitryon is suspect, and the description of him far from choice. The Signature is :

στρέφων ἰάμβους κρῖν' ἐς εἶδος ἄλλ' ὅλον·  
τὸν 'Αττικὸν τραγωιδὸν Εὐρίπου τόκον

*Twist and separate the iambics into a wholly different form :  
The Attic tragedian, Son of Euripos.*

4. The Signature Salaminian, originally of Athens.  
Alkestis :

ὦ δώματ' 'Αδμήτει' ἐν οἷς ἔτλην ἐγὼ  
θῆσαν τράπεζαν αἰνέσαι θεός περ ὦν

There is little fault to be found with these lines. They are however a Signature :

ἔπη τάδε τίς ἔπαιζες ἀνερωτώμενος  
Σαλαμίνιος τᾶνδ' 'Αθήνηθέν γ' ἐρῶ

*If I be asked : Who are you who composed these humorous  
verses ?*

*I shall say : A Salaminian, but originally from Athens.*

The Alkestis is supposed to be either a comedy or a Satyric drama.

5. The Signature Salaminian :  
Phoenissae :

ὦ τὴν ἐν ἄστροις οὐρανοῦ τέμνων ὁδόν,  
καὶ χρυσοκολλήτοισιν ἐμβεβῶς δίφροις

These verses seem faultless. They contain the Signature :

στοιχεῖ' ἰάμβους τούσδ' ὁρῶν κρῖν'· εὖ δ' ὁρῶ  
Σαλαμίνιον βόησον, ἐκτελῶν στροφὴν

*When you see these iambs, examine the letters ; and call out " I see well a Salaminian ", when you finish the shifting.*

## SIGNATURES OF MINOR DRAMATISTS

We may end with the Signatures of three anonymous prologues in the sense that we have no tradition to guide us.

Second Prologue of the Rhesus :

ὦ τοῦ μεγίστου Ζηνὸς ἄλκιμον τέκος  
Παλλὰς παρῶμεν οὐκ ἐχρῆν ἡμᾶς ἔτι

Solution :

στοιχεῖ' ἐμῶν ἄλλασσ' ἐπῶν. νοοῦ σύ γε  
Ζηνοκράτη καμὸς πατήρ τὸ κλέμμ' ὕπο

*Shift the letters of my words. Mark you*

*"Zenokrates" and my father is beneath the cryptogram*

Danae :

δόμοι μὲν οἶδ' εὐπυργά τ' ἐρύματα χθονὸς  
οὐκ ἐν πολυχρύσοισιν ἥσκηται χλιδαῖς

Solution :

στοιχεῖα τοῖνδ' ἄλλασσ' ἐποῖν ὅπη ρυθμὸς  
Εὐρυκράτην υἱόν με Δυσμάχου κίχοι

*Shift the letters of my couplet in such wise that the rhythm may detect me to be Eurykrates son of Dysmachos.*

Archelaos :

Δαναὸς ὁ πεντήκοντα θυγατέρων πατήρ  
Νείλου λιπὼν κάλλιστον ἐκ γαίας ὕδωρ

Solution :

νῦν τῶνδε πόλλ' ἄλλασσ' ἐπῶν. τραγωιδία  
κέκραγ' Ἀθηναίου ποτ' ἦν Νεικοστράτου

*Now shift a number of these words : the Tragedy cries out I once belonged to the Athenian Neikostratos.*

## SIGNATURE OF THE RHESOS

We may terminate this study by an attempt at the solution of a well-known puzzle : the authorship of the Rhesos. That the initial iambics contain a signature is clear not only from the arguments which have been produced, but from their content : for the news that the Achaeans were about to slink away could not be regarded as alarming : and if we give φόβος its Homeric sense of flight, the clause "although announcing a flight" seems to have little meaning. Further ἦλθες is unnatural, whence it has been emended to the correct ἦκεις. Now what has been seen in all the cipher is that the expressions used are simple, and that we should begin the solution by eliminating the guiding lines, *i.e.*, those which direct the reader to shift the letters. Hence we begin by eliminating ἄλλασσε ἄκροιν ἐποῖν, τραγωιδία, and have to learn the signature from the remainder. The whole will then read:

ἄλλασσ' ἄκροιν γ' ἄρρητ' ἐποῖν τραγωιδίας  
στρέφ' ἔπη σὺ δ' ἔκλεγ' ἐκ Κολωνῶν γ' ἔβην

*Substitute unspoken words for the topmost couplet of the Tragedy :*

*Twist the words and pick out : I started from Kolonos.*

This is for ἐξέβην.

We have already found "from Kolonos" a sufficient signature for Sophokles ; the old critics were therefore right in holding that this play was in the Sophoklean style.

It is interesting, and to a certain extent amusing to find in these cryptograms so many allusions to the κόπος or fatigue which was undergone by those who undertook their solution. If the present writer's experience is similar to theirs, the amount of labour required varies very greatly ; some of the puzzles are soluble in five minutes ; others have taken hours. When the solution has been reached one quickly forgets how hopeless the mass of  $\rho$  or  $\tau$  at one time looked.

One further remark may be made. It is often thought that on the Day of Judgment men will be surprised at the wholly new value put on the deeds that come for sentence ; what was thought trifling will prove of vast importance, and what was thought superb will turn out to have been valueless. The initial iambics of the Tragedies have been subject to the attempts of emenders, who reckon among them the very greatest names in Hellenic scholarship. That work comes for judgment when it is found that each letter has a double use : and the correctness of the reading is certified by its serving both purposes. Of all the emendations it would seem that only two can be allowed to survive : and these by scholars who usually take a back seat, Erfurdt and Gilbert Wakefield !

## CHAPTER II

### THE HOMERIC CIPHER

IN the first group of cryptograms which was solved in the last chapter it was dinned into our ears that we should not shift the letters of the fourth iambic couplet, for it would be waste of labour. The inference which was drawn was that it would not be similar waste to shift the letters of the first three couplets ; and the results of the process have been seen. It cannot very well be denied that the expedient adopted by the Dramatists for indicating that their cipher had terminated is a clumsy one ; if it is worth while composing a puzzle it should also be worth solving. This procedure is explicable on one hypothesis only : viz., that the cipher was a modification of some other sort. The acrostic whereby the Latin translator of the Iliad, Italicus, records his name, substituting eight lines for the seven of the Prologue of the Iliad, indicates where the Homeric cipher is to be found. Translators rarely introduce such exercises of themselves, but when what they find in their original is too hard for them to imitate, they substitute something simpler. Italicus found that the Homeric signature was an anagram of the first two vertical columns of the Prologue, and may or may not have known that the whole of this Prologue was cipher, and when read to the end made eight iambic lines and neither more nor less. He substituted something easy for something exceedingly hard.

Tables are given at the end of this chapter showing how the Homeric Prefaces are to be deciphered ; here



the text and translation of each will be given. It will then be shown that the thoughts which these Prefaces contain are similar to or identical with those which are expressed by other poets in the prefaces to their works. We shall then collect such allusions to the Homeric Prefaces as can be found in ancient writers, while endeavouring to account for the general ignorance of their existence.

PREFACE TO THE ILIAD<sup>1</sup>

‘Ομήρου Ἰήτα’ ὅπ’ ἐξίλλων ὄρων,  
 ὦ οὐλε δαῖμον, δηίας ἐναντίας,  
 τῇι δύσε’ ἦιτ’ ἔδυτε πένθη Ὀρφέως·  
 μίμν’ ὕδαθ’, ἄπτε δ’ οἶα πῦρ αἶας ξένας.  
 5 ἄψω δ’ Ἀχιλλῆϊς χάρις Τροίῃ δύω·  
 Δαναοί τε δὴ σά τ’ ἡὺς ὦ Αἰνέα τέκεα  
 δίχ’ ἔλλαχ’ ἔργ’. εἰ δ’ Ἐρισι κλεῖτ’ εὖ ποίεον,  
 ὃ τ’ Ἀθηναίης βουλαῖς χ’ ἔλῃσι σκέψευ τέλος.

## TRANSLATION

Into the voice of Homer of Ios, “expelling” from the  
 bounds,

O gracious deity, the contrary fiends,  
 Enter even as ye entered the laments of Orpheus ;  
 Waters stopped, like fire they kindled strange lands.

5 Let me, the Achilleis, a gift to Troy, kindle two ;  
 Of the Danai and thy children, brave Aeneas,  
 The allotted lands are sundered. And if I have  
 composed with skill tales for the powers of Strife,  
 Consider what tribute thou wilt take for the counsels  
 of Athene.

<sup>1</sup> A few notes on the Greek will be given at the end of the chapter.

This preface commences with the name and gentile name of the author, as is the case with those of Herodotus and Thucydides. The sentence into which these are introduced is a prayer to the appropriate god, an etymology of whose name is given (as is usual in such cases), and whose favour to a predecessor is recorded. The assertion that the waters stopped to hear the lays of Orpheus is found in Latin poets ; doubtless it comes from some Greek source, ultimately traceable to this preface. To " fire " in the sense of to arouse interest or enthusiasm is a metaphor found in most languages ; the Greek verb has the double sense of " kindle " and " join," which cannot be easily reproduced. The author's prayer is that he may arouse the interest of the two nations with whom the poem deals ; a prayer which was certainly fulfilled. A scholiast asks why the Iliad was not called Ἀχιλλεία ; it would seem that this title (with a slight grammatical difference) was actually given the poem by the author. In the final sentence we are told that this work which is devoted to the powers of Strife is a preparation for one which is to deal with the works of the goddess of Wisdom. This thought is repeated in the preface to the Odyssey in the same language, and the same is found in one of the Scholiasts' prefaces to the Odyssey.

It is a remarkable fact that Dio Chrysostom, who repeatedly observes that Homer nowhere mentions his own name, writes as though he had had the opening lines of the Preface before him ; for he compares Homer with Orpheus in the very matter to which the Preface alludes, viz. the power of exciting the interest of foreigners, and attributes this power to the inspiration

of Apollo ! The passage is in his 53rd Oration, ii. 277 R. *Assuredly without the inspiration of Apollo and the Muses it would be impossible for poetry to be so sublime and magnificent, and in addition sweet, as to sway all this time not only those who speak the same language, but many of the barbarians besides ; so that certain mixed and bilingual races, otherwise unacquainted with Hellenic matters, are thoroughly familiar with Homer's verses, which is also the case with some who live at a great distance ; as indeed it is asserted that the Homeric poems are chanted among the Indians who have translated them into their own vernacular. . . . And in this power Homer seems to me to have outdone the Sirens and Orpheus. For what else is meant by charming and attracting stones, plants and beasts than obtaining such control over barbarians unacquainted with the Hellenic language, and no better versed in the matters wherewith the poems deal ?*

In this passage even the Homeric δίχ' ἔλλαχ' ἔργα might seem to be paraphrased by ἐνίοις τῶν σφόδρα μακρὰν διωικισμένων. Dio's naturalistic interpretation of the feat of Orpheus seems to have been anticipated by Homer, whose ideas may have reached Dio through some unknown channel, just as the stopping of the waters reached the Latin poets through some lost medium.

## PREFACE TO THE ODYSSEY

Σύ πη πατήρ, "Απολλον. ὦ ἄνα,  
 πόλλ' ἴλαθ'· "ἔλλων" δύντ' "ἀγρόνδ'" ἀχῶν γόμον,  
 ἴθ' ἄμ με δὺς ἄειρ' ἄγων, ἀήθε' οὐ  
 ὁδοῖο. κατθέντ' ἔννεπες Σφαγὴν ὄθεν  
 5 πότ' ὦρτ', "Εριν τ'· "Αρεα τόπου ἔο Βορέω

- τρέψαντ' ἐπ' οἴμῳ σὺν θυσίῃς, εὐχῆς, πυρῆς,  
 διέν' ἀγρύπνας ἔπεα καθαρεῦντα φρένας,  
 τίνοντι σόν, Λαερτιάδαο πότνια,  
 λόγου τέλος, θεῖσ' ὅσσ' ἔλετο τὰ ἄ κλέα  
 10 "Ομηρον" Ἴλιον Νέον ποιεῖν ἔπη.  
 εἰκάς τετράς θ' ὁ νόος. ὃ κοίμαον πρὶν ἐν  
 τιμαῖσι, θυμὸν ἦγ' ἐπ' ἄλλο ῥῆμ' ἐμόν,  
 "Απολλον, ἔρνος Αἰνέας Τρωίων.

## TRANSLATION

- Thou, Apollo, art methinks the author. O Lord,  
 Be very gracious "Expelling" the load of care  
 which has entered,  
 Come, enter me, and bear me aloft, not un-  
 accustomed  
 To the road. Thou didst bid me lay aside Slaughter  
 there whence  
 5 It once arose and Strife ; Ares in his place, directing  
 him  
 To the region of the North Wind, with sacrifices,  
 prayers and torches.  
 Then to rehearse such lays as will relieve the sleep-  
 less mind,  
 Paying, O patroness of Laertes's son,  
 Thy tribute of speech, composing as many lays as  
 10 New Ilion elected that Homer should make of her  
 tales.  
 A score and a quaternion is the meaning. That  
 scion of Aeneas  
 Whom I used to lull to sleep amid the cares of  
 office  
 Used to urge me to take another Trojan theme.

The home of the War-god is Thrace (Iliad xiii. 301, Od. viii. 361), which is also that of the North wind (Iliad ix. 5); the Eumenides are similarly sent to their homes with sacrifices, prayers and torch-lights (Aeschylus, Eum. 1005-1009). That Athene was the special patroness of Odysseus is emphasized in the Odyssey (iii. 218-222, xx. 47). The description of the Odyssey as "diverting" literature does not require any defence. The sentences are so arranged as to bring in the name Homer and identify the author of the present work with him.

Both these Prefaces commence with an address to Apollo, which is indeed so necessary that some one who was ignorant of the existence of the preface prefixed a line to the Iliad wherein Apollo was invoked. In both the same etymology of his name is adopted; *to expel*, i.e. evil powers. The obvious etymology of the name, which Aeschylus once adopts,<sup>1</sup> so shocked the pious Plato that he could not bring himself to mention it.<sup>2</sup> Aeschylus however alludes to the Homeric etymology, when he makes Apollo "expel" the fiends from his sanctuary.<sup>3</sup>

Dante in the Paradiso requests the good Apollo *to enter his breast*, which comes near the expressions in the Prefaces. The weight of care prevents the poet from soaring; Juvenal emphasizes this: the true poet *anxietate carens animus facit*. The prayer to be borne aloft by the god scarcely needs illustration; Valerius Flaccus says *eripe me populis et habenti nubila terrae*.

<sup>1</sup> Agamemnon 1081.

<sup>2</sup> Cratylus 404 e.

<sup>3</sup> Eumenides 179.



In the Preface to the Iliad the writer refers to an earlier celebrity, Orpheus, as Milton in the Preface to Paradise Lost refers to Moses whom the Muse (!) had previously inspired ; but in the Preface to the Odyssey he can point to his own performance ; so too Milton in the Preface to Paradise Regained says *Inspire as thou art wont My prompted song, else mute*. Similarly in the Preface to the Achilleis Statius reminds Apollo that he is no stranger to the Aonian grove.

The Preface to the Iliad ends with an offer to pay tribute to the goddess of Wisdom, if Apollo is satisfied with that to the god of Strife. Apollo now issues the necessary command ; apparently because the poet's patron, Aeneades, had urged the composition of another Iliad, wherein his own services as a warrior should be recorded ; and Apollo makes the poets decline such invitations. *Phoebus volentem proelia me loqui captas et urbes increpuit lyra*.

The poem in honour of Athene is to be in the same number of books as the former, and this number is specified as 24. At a far later period we find Diodorus Siculus state the number and content of his books in order to frustrate those who are accustomed to mutilate other people's works. And this precaution is a highly effective one.

There is thus no thought in these deciphered prefaces which cannot be paralleled from the prefaces of other poets to their works. The lines prefixed to the Aeneid of Vergil, whether genuine or not, call attention like the Preface to the Odyssey to the change of theme ; the poet of pastorals and agriculture has now taken to



sing of war. Spenser in the Introduction to the Faerie Queene says about the same ; he is now  
 enforst, a farre unfitter taske,

For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine oaten reeds ;  
 he is " enforst " by the Muse, who is requested to help him to perform her will. But when an author changes his theme, the suspicion may arise that his former effort was unsuccessful ; whence the final words wherein the earliest poet explains that this was far from being the case are also in accordance with human nature. Vergil's *gratum opus agricolis* is not unlike this in thought. The purpose of such works, distracting the anxious, had succeeded so well in the case of Aeneades that the prince would gladly have had another work on the same theme.

Just as the absence of all mention of Athene at the beginning of an Attic drama was calculated to arouse the suspicion that there must be a mention of her in cipher, so the silence about Apollo at the beginning of the two Poems might well arouse a similar suspicion. The principle of Theognis, that Phoebus should be mentioned at the beginning and the end of any poetical undertaking is not likely to have been invented by himself. Loxias would have no difficulty in reading the cipher.

From Italicus, the latest writer acquainted with the Signature, we go back some centuries to Aristotle, who evidently knew to what city Homer belonged, since he asserts<sup>1</sup> that he was not a Chian, and is likely to have made Ios his home, even though the passage cited from him for that assertion be spurious.<sup>2</sup> His information is likely to have come from the Preface,

<sup>1</sup> Rhetoric 1398 b. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Fragments, 1487 a 35.

where the actual word (*Ἰήτης*) occurs which is used by the author of the fragment. Much more interesting however is the occurrence of the famous *katharsis* in the Preface to the *Odyssey*, line 7. In one of the Problems (xviii. 1) the philosopher explains how the reading of entertaining literature enables people to sleep, because it effects that restoration of the due proportion between heat and cold which in his system is called *katharsis*. What strikes every reader of the *Poetics* who verifies the statement that the Definition of Tragedy is collected from the preceding is that for this *katharsis* there is no such preparation. It may be inferred that this was known to be the purpose of Tragedy from the fact that the founder of Tragedy (Homer) had stated it with regard to one of his works.

In the Tragedians there are phrases and thoughts which coincide with some in the Prefaces, but are no more necessarily taken from them than are those parallels which we have found in Dante, Milton and others. We have however seen that the Tragic cipher can only be explained as a simplification of the Homeric cipher, for were it original, it would scarcely have resorted to the clumsy expedient of a fourth anagram, of which the import is "I contain nothing; further cipher is not to be sought." The assignation of the *third* couplet is doubtless suggested by the Homeric name *Tritogeneia*, which seems to mean "third-born," and in spite of the original brevity of the first vowel may well have that sense. The employment of the first couplet for the Signature is clearly an imitation of the *Iliad*. Since something had to be inserted in the second couplet, it was natural to employ it for the date.

In making the same letters serve for a prologue and a preface on the colossal scale which has been seen Homer has not been much more successful than his imitators. The faults of the prologue to the *Iliad* were noticed by many in antiquity. The opening word *μῆνιν* was condemned on two grounds ; it is no just description of the contents of the poem,<sup>1</sup> and it is an inauspicious word unsuitable for the commencement of a poem.<sup>2</sup> Lucian asked Homer's ghost why he had commenced with this word, and obtained no satisfactory reply. F. A. Wolf took the trouble to re-write the whole Prologue, beginning with the eminently suitable word *κῦδος* "glory." This theory of inauspicious words is not altogether an idle superstition. If a work commences *The wrath of Achilles, plague upon it!* some readers may reiterate the curse, and decline to have anything more to do with it. Protagoras objected to the use of the imperative, *sing*, in addressing a goddess ; Aristotle made light of the objection : yet an examination of prayers shows that they normally commence with something more respectful ; " I beseech thee " or the like is introduced. Pingres justly regarded the third word *goddess* as obscure. Many goddesses sing, whence the goddess addressed ought to be called by her name. He introduced a pentameter in order to get rid of this difficulty.<sup>3</sup> Plutarch admires Homer for his courage in beginning the poem with an unmetrical line ; the Scholia on Hephaestion record an interesting attempt at scanning it. Aristotle himself regards the fourth word as an example of an irrational lengthening, which is per-

<sup>1</sup> Dio Chrysostom xi., i. 321 R.

<sup>2</sup> Scholia.

<sup>3</sup> Suidas s.v.

haps hypercritical. The rest of the Prologue is little less liable to objection. It is sufficient to observe that line 6 has to be taken with line 1.

The Prologue to the *Odyssey* is quoted by Horace as a model performance ; his translation, however,

*Dic mihi Musa virum captæ post tempora Troiæ  
Qui mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes*<sup>1</sup>

though it evades some of the difficulties, reproduces others which have in recent times been duly noted by I. Bekker and Wilamowitz-Möllendorf. The word *πολύτροπον* applied to *Odysseus* is so difficult that the half of a closely printed column is devoted to it in the *Homeric Lexicon* of Ebeling. The dealings of *Odysseus* on his wanderings were for the most part not with men but with giants and fairies ; and it is not clear that he visited the cities of many men.

These objections, though they do not wholly vanish, yet become far less valid, when it is seen that every letter of each line has a second duty to discharge ; and the astounding ingenuity of the puzzles makes us forget the objections. Wolf, one fancies, must have come very near detecting them ; only his idea—learned from that great authority on Greek literature, *Flavius Josephus*—that the poems were not written by their author naturally obscured his vision. If the question be asked : How is it that these puzzles which lie so near the surface, and of which there are so many indications, have been forgotten since the time of *Italicus*, it is not difficult to think of a reply. The *synaphea* of anapaestic

<sup>1</sup> *Ars Poetica* 141.

verse, and the Porsonic pause lie much nearer the surface, but remained hidden till fairly recent times. Bentley, who noticed the former, was unacquainted with the latter.<sup>1</sup>

In early inscriptions the letters are made to occupy the same spaces, whence the result is similar to that of typescript, the letters forming columns separated by columns of space. Perhaps it is to this that Pindar refers when he speaks of *straightening according to the rhabdos of the divine verses of Homer*,<sup>2</sup> since the hexameters are so notoriously irregular that they should not serve as an illustration of "straightness"; they might however of "fluting," which the word employed suggests. Had that method of writing been maintained, the idea of treating the letters as columns would have occurred to many.

Further there is truth in the saying of Sophokles that that which is sought for is found, whereas that which is neglected escapes. The commencement of the Iliad with the words *Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles son of Peleus, plague upon it!* certainly suggests questions; one inference that has been drawn is that since the Poem as we have it does not answer this description, the original work must have been different. This solution should however have been rejected on the ground that the wrath of Achilles was exhibited in his withdrawal from the fray; and this is surely no adequate subject for a poem: one may magnify or extol what a man does,

<sup>1</sup> See his note on *Ars Poetica* 260, where he asserts that the line

*O grata cardo regium egressum indicans*

observes the Greek rules *exactissime*.

<sup>2</sup> *Isthmia* iv. 66.



but a negation provides no material. Or it might be inferred that the prologue had been prefixed by an inferior hand. Let some one prefix some verses to the first chapter of Genesis, and see what chance they will have of becoming part of the text. The skilful interpolator will avoid this particular portion of the work.

The one hypothesis which will account for the faults in the prologue is that which we have worked, viz. that each of the letters serves two masters, and cannot in consequence discharge both its tasks faithfully. And he who solves the first anagram, whether incorrectly as *By Homer Poet*, or correctly, when he has discovered the metrical rule, will do well to try the same process on similar columns in the prologues of other poems. If he tries it on that of the *Aeneid*, he will not find therein any of the three names *Publius Vergilius Maro*, nor those of *Apollo*, or the *Muse*. Neither will he have better luck with the prologue to the *Thebaid* of Statius. Hence the hypothesis of accident is excluded even in the case of the first anagram ; with each successive solution it is yet further expelled, and is totally inconsistent with the fact that when the anagrams have been all solved, they provide eight complete iambic verses without anything left over or anything omitted. It is conceivable that the prologue of the *Aeneid* may harbour a puzzle, since its assertions are extraordinary in themselves, and conflict with what follows. This last matter should not perhaps be urged in the case of Vergil, who appears to have composed book by book, whereas the Homeric plan is to start from the end and compose all simultaneously. If, however, the prologue of the *Aeneid* harbours a signature, the present writer has been unable to locate it.



It may be pointed out not only that the existence of Homeric Signatures is denied,<sup>1</sup> but that if the tradition of the prefaces had been maintained, various questions could not have arisen : *e.g.* whether the two Poems were or were not by the same author, where Homer was born, and whether the Poems had or had not been transliterated from some other alphabet to the Ionic. Further, suggestions were made by the Alexandrian critics which make it certain that those from whom they emanated were unaware of the puzzles ; *e.g.* one critic would have rejected the fifth line of the prologue to the Iliad as an interpolation. To this the reply seems to be that in the first place the fact of the existence of a thing is not affected by its being unknown ; and in the second that most of these questions seem to have arisen after the period which closes with the Battle of Chaeronea. We shall take another opportunity of illustrating the astounding density of some of those critics whose observations find a place in the Scholia and in the works of serious grammarians. That the Iliad and Odyssey could be by different authors seems never to have occurred to Aristotle or Plato ; and both were Homeric specialists. Herodotus gives reasons for doubting the correctness of the ascription of the Kypria to Homer, but it does not occur to him to question that of the Odyssey. To Pindar the Iliad and the Odyssey are the work of Homer. The Cyclic authors to one who sees through them obtain their materials from these two works and possess no other sources of information. The doubt which first meets us in Alexandrian times was not then a fragment

<sup>1</sup> Dio Chrysostom ii. 284 R.

of continuous tradition, but one which arose in critical minds, if by criticism we mean not sifting, but doubting.

With regard to his birthplace : as we have seen, Aristotle seems to have been clear on the subject ; and the theory that it was Chios was doubtless due to the uncritical supposition that the Hymn to Apollo was by him, and that this Hymn implied that Chios was his native place. Certainly suggestions as to his birthplace which imply that the matter was doubtful go back to Pindar and earlier, if our authorities may be trusted ; and the inference which we may draw from this is that the prefaces were known to a small circle only, just as in the story of Heraklides it is made clear that even a professional man of letters in the fourth century might be unacquainted with the Tragic signatures. Or, since the matter which follows the signature is such as adds little to the reader's knowledge, the study may ordinarily have terminated with the signature, and that is likely to be misread *By Homer Poet*, whereby the indication of the birthplace is lost. This would account for the name Poet being restricted by many to Homer, and so commonly applied to him as to serve instead of a proper name.

The question of transliteration comes to the front very late, scarcely before the second half of the second century A.D., whence the evidence of the prefaces on this point would not have been required till long after the Tragic tradition had become obscure.

There are cases where literary secrets have been forgotten though we should expect to find them scrupulously preserved. Many Surahs (chapters) of the *Koran* commence with one or more letters the sense of

which (according to one sect) "the Almighty has reserved for His own knowledge"; certainly what the followers of the Prophet Mohammed have to say about them is the merest guesswork, and infelicitous guesswork. Th. Nöldeke suggested that they were originally initials or names of persons from whom the collector of the Koran obtained materials. The suggestion has much in its favour, only we have no evidence that the Surahs were really obtained from persons whose names might be thus represented, and their treatment by the faithful as portions of the divine revelation must, if this account of the matter be correct, be regarded as most surprising; for knowledge of the book would seem from the time of its collection to have been handed on by a series of trained and authorized teachers, who might well have received no sound instruction concerning the meaning of the text, but ought not to have been able to confuse the collector's marks with it.

The person who might have been expected to have preserved some notice of or some allusion to the Tragic cipher is Athenaeus, whose learning was vast, and who has a chapter on riddles. Nevertheless that learning has its limitations, and there is little surprising about some secret perishing in the period which separates him from Italicus, though from the mode wherein Diogenes speaks of the *parastichis* it might seem that he understood what it was; it will be seen that where he quotes the difficult phrase ἐξ ὑποβολῆς he offers a conjecture, though quite a wrong one, about its meaning. Contemporaries are not always possessed of the same information.

And then the secret may have perished by degrees.

Certainly we have evidence that in the post-Attic centuries the question of Homer's birthplace occupied many minds, and the initial words of the cipher of the *Iliad* are nowhere quoted as settling the matter. Instead of going to the cipher "psychical research" was employed for the purpose of ascertaining the truth on this subject. The grammarian Apion, known to us from the attacks upon him by Josephus, appealed to Homer's ghost, but was not allowed to reveal the Poet's reply to the question about his birthplace and parentage.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor Adrian went to the Delphic Oracle<sup>2</sup>; which replied that Homer was the son of Telemachos and Nestor's daughter Epikaste. Without wishing to throw doubt on the inspiration of this or any other medium, we may indicate the method whereby this information might have been acquired, as it was one inherited from the Cyclic Poets. In *Odyssey* iii. 196 Nestor points out to Telemachos what an advantage it is to leave a son behind; and, since he is fair and tall, Telemachos is advised to be a brave man so that one of the later generation may eulogize him. It is quite reasonable—from the point of view of the cyclic interpretation—to paraphrase these words: since you are in the prime of life, you should marry and beget a son who may be your eulogist. Hence it is most probable that Homer is referring to himself; for he certainly carried out the task of eulogizing Telemachos.

And, as Sherlock Holmes would say, one sound inference immediately suggests others. For when Telemachos leaves the court of Menelaos Helen gives him a

<sup>1</sup> Pliny N.H. xxx. §18.

<sup>2</sup> *Certamen Hesiodi et Homeri*, p. 314.

wedding present (xv. 127). Now if modern experience counts for anything, we may say that no one ever gives a wedding present except to persons who are betrothed. Hence we may infer with reasonable certainty that Telemachos had in the interval wooed and won. The only eligible lady whom he meets on his travels is Nestor's daughter Polykaste. And the supposition that this lady was not only betrothed but married to Telemachos would get rid of a serious difficulty in iii. 464. Hence the supposition that Homer was the son of this couple has everything in its favour—except that Homer was a man of flesh and blood, whereas Telemachos, Nestor, and Polykaste were all fictions.<sup>1</sup>

It is not recorded whether the Emperor was or was not satisfied with the reply made by the Delphic Oracle. It clearly did not satisfy Philostratus, who belongs to a generation after Adrian, and could get no information on the subject from Protesilaos, who credited Homer with the idea of keeping his birthplace secret in order that the cities might contend for the honour of having produced him.<sup>2</sup>

The attempts that have been made to show that the text exhibits signs of transliteration from some other alphabet have been unsuccessful, and indeed if this process had ever been executed, something should have

<sup>1</sup> Since, as the Indian proverb says, "even a fool does nothing without a reason," there must be some cause for the substitution of the form Epikaste for Polykaste here, and of Iokaste for Epikaste by the Tragedians. The metrical need which produces such a terrible form as the Sophoklean *Lartios* for *Laertes* does not apply in this case.

<sup>2</sup> Heroikos, § 18.



been heard of it. It is rightly argued against it that it was the popularity of the Homeric Poems (since this is probably meant by "the Ionic Poets") which caused the Ionic alphabet to displace the others.

That the seven hexameters of the Iliad Prologue make exactly eight iambic verses with nothing wanting or superfluous would show any one who considered the matter that accident had here no voice ; moreover the promise of the Odyssey which is given in the final verse is taken up in the Preface to the Odyssey where the word used in the former τέλος is repeated. That the first foot of the Preface to the Odyssey is wanting must be admitted ; but as this is followed by twelve complete lines, of which the end of the last coincides with the end of the hexametric text, it seems reasonable to attribute the metrical flaw to the desire to make the first anagram serve for a complete line. And for this twenty letters were insufficient. The flaw has however one advantage : it shows that ingenuity is not a quality which enters into the decipherment of these puzzles, since that quality ought not to find any difficulty about so small a matter as supplying one foot ; as it cannot do that, still less could it find a series of twelve verses with appropriate sense, metre, and grammar, unless they had been put there by the author. Hence the quality required for deciphering these lines is not ingenuity, but patience.

There is no real doubt concerning the word meant to be supplied ; this is λόγος which is twice used by Plato with πατήρ, though in slightly different senses ; once it means "author," and once "suggester." Probably the word πατήρ in this place is regarded as sufficient to suggest λόγος, which supplements both sense and metre.



It is characteristic of the way wherein the author's mind worked that the imperfection occurs not at the end, but at the beginning.

The metre which alone makes it possible to read the prefaces was discovered when the fifth anagram of the Preface to the *Odyssey* was read :

*καθέντ' ἔννεπες σφαγήν*

" thou didst command, having put aside Slaughter " : a group which was placed beyond the range of accident by the words of one of the Greek scholiasts' prefaces to the *Odyssey* : ἀπὸ τῆς ἐναγωνίου καὶ πολεμικῆς Ἰλιάδος ἐπὶ τὴν ἠθικὴν μεταβῶμεν Ὀδύσσειαν " let us pass from the combative and warlike *Iliad* to the moralizing *Odyssey*." Accident would not give anything so suitable. Further since only Apollo could give such an order, this confirmed the reading of the first anagram. But these words were clearly the middle of an iambic line, and what remained was to find its commencement and its termination. As the names Strife, Ares, and the northern home of the latter came into view, there was no question that a right track was being followed, though solution was more difficult than had been the case with the dramatic cipher, since it was not known in advance what the lines were to contain. The metre turned out to be of the same rigidity as that of Archilochus ; presently it was found possible to read the whole so as to give continuous sense and false solutions could be removed and those which were clearly correct substituted for them. When this task had been completed it helped to solve the similar puzzle in the *Iliad*, where however the metre is slightly less rigid.

Whether any works besides the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey* and

the Tragedies (besides the works of Epicharmus) were armed with cipher of this sort is unknown to the present writer. The prologue of one of the Cyclic epics is preserved with a very slight lacuna, but the system of cipher which has been found workable in the case of the Homeric poems does not appear to be workable here ; and indeed it would be surprising if one of these poetasters had been able to do as much in the way of imitation as the composition of such a puzzle implies. The works of Hesiod are signed in a simpler way. Theognis speaks of a *σφραγίς* or " seal " which he wishes his works to have set upon them enabling any one to say that they are his : this would however seem to refer to " a hall-mark " in the sense of excellence of style rather than to a cryptic signature.

The Homeric cipher could of course stand alone without the support of the tragic modification of it, and, had it not existed, the latter would not help it ; even in the case of the 33 tragedies, unless the cipher existed in each, the fact that it had been traced in others would not lead to its discovery. Only when the prejudice against cipher is so strong, and it must be got over somehow before the contents of this work will even obtain a hearing, it seemed wisest to show by a multitude of examples that the double-line cipher was in such familiar use that it was to be expected in the Homeric prologues ; the statement by the author that he composed each of his works in twenty-four books is of such importance that the foundation for it cannot be too strongly laid. And since such a thing as cipher exists, it would seem that the right method of dealing with any ostensible discovery of the kind is not to howl the discoverer down,

but to ask the question : Will every one who works your cipher out arrive at the same results, or will each person obtain his own ? For this is the test which should distinguish between fact and fancy. And since it will be found that in no case has the writer altered one letter for the benefit of the cipher,<sup>1</sup> or taken any other liberty of any sort with the texts, except rejecting emendations, and the solutions here furnished are such as have been reached in most cases after various provisional attempts, there seems no reason to doubt that all who work on the principles given will reach the same results. When Gesenius published his collection of Phœnician inscriptions, his renderings were for the most part tentative, and have with better knowledge been abandoned. The inference to be drawn was not that the inscriptions were meaningless, but that the first person who handles such matters rarely finishes the task : the mistaken solutions are abandoned, and that which is correct remains.

<sup>1</sup> The regular omission of the ephelkystic  $\nu$  at the end of the lines is an exception which proves the rule.

# THE PROLOGUE TO THE ILIAD

TABLE I

κατὰ ῥάβδον

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
MH	NI	NA	EI	ΔE	ΘE	ΑΠ	ΗΛ	HI	ΑΔ	EΩ	ΑΧ	ΙΑ	H				ΟΣ
OY	ΛO	ME	NH	NH	MY	PI	AX	AI	OI	ΣA	ΛΓ	EE	ΘH				KE
ΠO	ΛΛ	ΑΣ	ΔI	ΦΘ	IM	OY	ΣΨ	YX	ΑΣ	AI	ΔI	ΠP	OI	A			ΨE
HP	ΩΩ	NA	YT	OY	ΣΔ	EE	ΛΩ	PI	AT	EY	XE	KY	NE	Σ			ΣI
OI	ΩN	OI	ΣI	TE	ΠA	ΣI	ΔI	OΣ	ΔE	TE	ΔE	IE	TO	BOY			ΛH
EE	OY	ΔH	TA	ΠP	ΩT	ΑΔ	ΙΑ	ΣT	HT	HN	EP	IE	AN				TE
AT	PE	ΙΑ	HΣ	TE	AN	AE	AN	ΔP	ΩN	KA	ΙΑ	IO	ΣA	XI	ΛΛ	E	YΣ

TABLE II

1.	M H O Y Π O H P O I E E A T	=	ΟΜΗΡΟΥ ΙΗΤΑ ΟΠ ΕΕ
2.	N I Λ O Λ Λ Ω Ω N O Y P E	=	ΙΛΛΩΝ ΟΡΩΝ Ω ΟΥΛΕ
3.	N A M E A Σ N A O I Δ H I Δ	=	ΔΑΙΜΟΝ ΔΗΙΑΣ ΕΝΑ
4.	E I N H Δ I Y T Σ I T A H Σ	=	N T I A Σ T H I Δ Y Σ E H I
5.	Δ E N H Φ Θ O Y T E Π P T E	=	T E Δ Y T E Π E N Θ H O P Φ
6.	Θ E M Y I M Σ Δ Π A Ω T A N	=	E Ω Σ M I M N Y Δ A Θ A Π T
7.	A Π P I O Y E E Σ I A Δ A E	=	E Δ O I A Π Y P A I A Σ E E
8.	H Λ A X Σ Ψ A Ω Δ I I A A N	=	N A Σ A Ψ Ω Δ A X I Λ A H I
9.	H I A I Y X P I O Σ Σ T Δ P	=	Σ X A P I Σ T P O I H I Δ Y
10.	A Δ O I A Σ A T Δ E H T Ω N	=	Ω Δ A N A O I T E Δ H Σ A T
11.	E Ω Σ A A I E Y T E H N K A	=	H Y Σ Ω A I N E A T E K E A
12.	A X Λ Γ Δ I X E Λ E E P I Δ	=	Δ I X E Λ Λ A X E P Γ E I Δ
13.	I Λ E E Π P K Y I E I Σ I O	=	E P I Σ I K A E I E Y Π O I
14.	H Θ H O I N E T O A N Σ A	=	E O N O T A Θ H N A I H Σ
15-17.	A Σ B O X I Y Λ A E	=	B O Y Λ A I Σ X E A
18.	O Σ K E Ψ E Σ I A H T E Y Σ	=	H I Σ Σ K E Ψ E Y T E Λ O Σ

# THE PROLOGUE TO THE ODYSSEY

TABLE I

κατὰ ῥάβδον.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
AN	ΔΡ	ΑΜ	ΟΙ	ΕΝ	ΝΕ	ΠΕ	ΜΟ	ΥΣ	ΑΠ	ΟΛ	ΥΤ	ΡΟ	ΠΟ	ΝΟ	ΣΜ	ΑΛ	ΑΠ	ΟΛ	ΛΑ
ΠΛ	ΑΓ	ΧΘ	ΗΕ	ΠΕ	ΙΤ	ΡΟ	ΙΗ	ΣΙ	ΕΡ	ΟΝ	ΠΤ	ΟΛ	ΙΕ	ΘΡ	ΟΝ	ΕΠ	ΕΡ		ΣΕ
ΠΟ	ΛΛ	ΩΝ	ΔΑ	ΝΘ	ΡΩ	ΠΩ	ΝΙ	ΔΕ	ΝΑ	ΣΤ	ΕΑ	ΚΑ	ΙΝ	ΟΟ	ΝΕ	Γ			ΝΩ
ΠΟ	ΛΛ	ΑΔ	ΟΓ	ΕΝ	ΠΟ	ΝΤ	ΩΙ	ΠΑ	ΘΕ	ΝΑ	ΛΓ	ΕΑ	ΟΝ	ΚΑ	ΤΑ	ΘΥ	Μ		ΟΝ
ΑΡ	ΝΥ	ΜΕ	ΝΟ	ΣΗ	ΝΤ	ΕΨ	ΥΧ	ΗΝ	ΚΑ	ΙΝ	ΟΣ	ΤΟ	ΝΕ	ΤΑ	ΙΡ				ΩΝ
ΑΛ	ΛΟ	ΥΔ	ΩΣ	ΕΤ	ΑΡ	ΟΥ	ΣΕ	ΡΡ	ΥΣ	ΑΤ	ΟΙ	ΕΜ	ΕΝ	ΟΣ	Π				ΕΡ
ΑΥ	ΤΩ	ΝΓ	ΑΡ	ΣΦ	ΕΤ	ΕΡ	ΗΙ	ΣΙ	ΝΑ	ΤΑ	ΣΘ	ΑΛ	ΙΗ	ΙΣ	ΙΝ	ΟΛ	ΟΝ		ΤΟ
ΝΗ	ΠΙ	ΟΙ	ΟΙ	ΚΑ	ΤΑ	ΒΟ	ΥΣ	ΥΠ	ΕΡ	ΙΟ	ΝΟ	ΣΗ	ΕΛ	ΙΟ					ΙΟ
ΗΣ	ΘΙ	ΟΝ	ΑΥ	ΤΑ	ΡΟ	ΤΟ	ΙΣ	ΙΝ	ΑΦ	ΕΙ	ΛΕ	ΤΟ	ΝΟ	ΣΤ	ΙΜ	ΟΝ	ΗΜ		ΑΡ
ΤΩ	ΝΑ	ΜΟ	ΘΕ	ΝΓ	ΕΘ	ΕΑ	ΘΥ	ΓΑ	ΤΕ	ΡΔ	ΙΟ	ΣΕ	ΙΠ	ΕΚ	ΑΙ	ΗΜ			ΙΝ



TABLE II

1. ΑΝ Π Α Π Ο Π Ο Α Ρ Α Λ Α Υ Ν Η Η Σ Τ Ω	= ΣΥ Π Η Π Α Τ Η Ρ Α Π Ο Λ Λ Ο Ν Ω Α Ν Α
2. Δ Ρ Α Γ Λ Λ Λ Ν Υ Λ Ο Τ Ω Π Ι Θ Ι Ν Α	= Π Ο Λ Λ Ι Λ Α Θ Ι Λ Λ Ω Ν Δ Υ Ν Τ Α Γ Ρ
3. Α Μ Χ Θ Ω Ν Α Δ Μ Ε Υ Δ Ν Γ Ο Ι Ο Ν Μ Ο	= Ο Ν Δ Α Χ Ω Ν Γ Ο Μ Ο Ν Ι Θ Α Μ Μ Ε Δ Υ
4. Ο Ι Η Ε Δ Α Ο Γ Ν Ο Ω Σ Α Ρ Ο Ι Α Υ Θ Ε	= Σ Α Ε Ι Ρ Α Γ Ω Ν Α Η Θ Ε Ο Υ Ο Δ Ο Ι Ο
5. Ε Ν Π Ε Ν Θ Ε Ν Σ Η Ε Τ Σ Φ Κ Α Τ Α Ν Γ	= Κ Α Τ Θ Ε Ν Τ Ε Ν Ν Ε Π Ε Σ Σ Φ Α Γ Η Ν
6. Ν Ε Ι Τ Ρ Ω Π Ο Ν Τ Α Ρ Ε Τ Α Ρ Ο Ε Θ	= Ο Θ Ε Ν Π Ο Τ Ω Ρ Τ Ε Ρ Ι Ν Τ Α Ρ Ε Α Τ
7. Π Ε Ρ Ο Π Ω Ν Τ Ε Ψ Ο Υ Ε Ρ Β Ο Τ Ο Ε Α	= Ο Π Ο Υ Ε Ο Β Ο Ρ Ε Ω Τ Ρ Ε Ψ Α Ν Τ Ε Π
8. Μ Ο Ι Η Ν Ι Ω Ι Υ Χ Σ Ε Η Ι Υ Σ Ι Σ Θ Υ	= Ο Ι Μ Ω Ι Σ Υ Ν Θ Υ Σ Ι Η Ι Σ Ε Υ Χ Η Ι
9. Υ Σ Σ Ι Δ Ε Π Α Η Ν Ρ Σ Ι Υ Π Ι Ν Γ Α	= Σ Π Υ Ρ Η Ι Σ Δ Ι Η Ε Ν Α Γ Ρ Υ Π Ν Α Σ
10. Α Π Ε Ρ Ν Α Θ Ε Κ Α Υ Σ Ν Α Ε Ρ Α Φ Τ Ε	= Ε Π Ε Α Κ Α Θ Α Ρ Ε Υ Ν Τ Α Φ Ρ Ε Ν Α Σ
11. Ο Λ Ο Ν Σ Τ Ν Α Ι Ν Α Τ Τ Α Ι Ο Ε Ι Ρ Δ	= Τ Ι Ν Ο Ν Τ Ι Σ Ο Ν Λ Α Ε Ρ Τ Ι Α Δ Α Ο
12. Υ Τ Π Τ Ε Α Λ Γ Ο Σ Ο Ι Σ Θ Ν Ο Λ Ε Ι Ο	= Π Ο Τ Ν Ι Α Λ Ο Γ Ο Υ Τ Ε Λ Ο Σ Θ Ε Ι Σ
13. Ρ Ο Ο Λ Κ Α Ε Α Τ Ο Ε Μ Α Λ Σ Η Τ Ο Σ Ε	= Ο Σ Σ Ε Λ Ε Τ Ο Τ Α Α Κ Λ Ε Α Ο Μ Η Ρ Ο
14. Π Ο Ι Ε Ι Ν Ο Ν Ν Ε Ε Ν Ι Η Ε Λ Ν Ο Ι Π	= Ν Ι Λ Ι Ο Ν Ν Ε Ο Ν Π Ο Ι Ε Ι Ν Ε Π Η Ε
15. Ν Ο Θ Ρ Ο Ο Κ Α Τ Α Ο Σ Ι Σ Ι Ο Σ Τ Ε Κ	= Ι Κ Α Σ Τ Ε Τ Ρ Α Σ Θ Ο Ν Ο Ο Σ Ο Κ Ο Ι
16. Σ Μ Ο Ν Ν Ε Τ Α Ι Ρ Π Ι Ν Ι Μ Α Ι	= Μ Α Ο Ν Π Ι Ρ Ι Ν Ε Ν Τ Ι Μ Α Ι Σ Ι
17. Α Λ Ε Π Γ Θ Υ Ο Λ Ο Ν Η Μ	= Θ Υ Μ Ο Ν Η Γ Ε Π Α Λ Λ Ο
18. Α Π Ε Ρ Μ Ο Ν Η Μ	= Ρ Η Μ Ε Μ Ο Ν Α Π
19. Ο Α	= Ο Α
20. Α Α Σ Ε Ν Ω Ο Ν Ν Ε Ρ Τ Ο Ι Ο Α Ρ Ι Ν	= Λ Ο Ν Ε Ρ Ν Ο Σ Α Ι Ν Ε Α Ο Τ Ρ Ω Ι Ω Ν

## NOTES

## Preface to the Iliad :—

1. With reference to the elision of the *o* of Ἰήταο Bergk, on Archilochus, fr. 77 says *hanc elisionem neque alii poetae neque Homerus plane fugiunt*. The *ι* of Ἴος is said to be short ; the cases wherein a short *ι* is lengthened for metrical reasons in Homer and even elsewhere are numerous. For ἐξίλλειν see Cobet, V.L. 361.

2. οὔλος is glossed προσηνής Il. ii. 6.

4. The plural of αἶα is not found ; that of γαῖα is, and the two words are used as identical in the Poems, the difference being metrical only.

8. For the elision of the *ι* of ὄτι see Kühner i. 187 ; and for the shortening of the *αι* of Ἀθηναίης i. 241. ἔμπαιον with the diphthong short is found in Od. xx. 379.

For the form σκέψευ see Kühner i. 567.

## Preface to the Odyssey :—

2. ἱλαθι. Kühner i. 651 regards the Homeric ἱληθι as a correction of the earlier ἱλαθι, where the middle vowel might be lengthened by arsis. ἀγρόνδε in Od. xxi. 370 is the equivalent of ἐξ οἴκου in 375.

5. τόπον. This word is frequently used by Aeschylus though it is not found in earlier authors. It is exceedingly suitable here, as the home of Ares can be specified, whereas that of Slaughter cannot be. Probably then like θυσίη, ἄγρυπνος and εὐχή it belongs to the vernacular, and is therefore avoided in the hexameters ; though εὐχή occurs once in the Odyssey. The same is the case with λόγος which is also used occasionally in lieu of the sublimer μῦθος.

6. *θυσίης*. The scansion of this word as an iambus can be justified from Homeric and even tragic usage, Kühner i. 180.

11. Sophokles ends an iambus with *ἐν*, O.C. 495.

12. *τοὺς ἐν τιμαῖς* in Iphig. Aul. 19 means "those in authority."

The only word before which hiatus is permitted in these Prefaces is that personal pronoun which has the same metrical peculiarity in Archilochus (fr. 29). The shortening of long vowels in hiatus appears to be allowed in the Preface to the Iliad but not in that to the Odyssey.

### CHAPTER III

#### HOMER'S LIFE AND WORK

THOUGH our materials for the treatment of this subject are scanty, they are copious as compared with those which were at the disposal of our predecessors. They had merely his name, which means *Hostage*. Its sense, as applied to a child, is rightly given by the novelist Chariton. "I love the child," says a father, "because it has made me surer of the mother; I have in it a *hostage* (Homeron) for her affection towards myself."<sup>1</sup> A terrible illustration of this thought is furnished by the *Medea* of Euripides; the husband becomes unfaithful, and the wife slaughters the hostages. A milder form of it is found in the observation of Aristotle that childless marriages are more likely to be dissolved than such as are fruitful, since the children constitute a bond.<sup>2</sup>

Little can indeed be inferred from this name, except perhaps that he was the eldest son, and that the relations between the parents were not of themselves sufficient to constitute a bond. The myths founded on the name in antiquity have no value; they are somewhat more scientific than those excogitated in modern times, because they usually give the word its correct signification.

His birthplace, as he tells us, was Ios, one of the minor Sporades. This word appears to be the Phoenician for

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Dorville, 77, 14.

<sup>2</sup> Nic. Ethics 1162 a 27.

*Island*, and another name for it was Phoenice, which probably refers to its colonization by Phoenicians. Of its condition at the time when the Homeric Poems were composed nothing is known. There are references to the Phoenicians in the Poems, but they imply very little accurate knowledge of the people, and none of their language.

Greek critics suppose Homer to have been a great traveller, and indeed a personal visit to Delos appears to be mentioned in *Od.* vi. 162. His error in the location of Pharos seems to show that he had heard of Egypt only by repute ; it was the land of magic to him, as it was to the author of *Exodus*, and at a later date to *Lucan*. Of the great empires of the Eastern world he had clearly not heard ; to *Plato*, with *Herodotus* before him, it occurred that *Troy* must have been an outpost of *Nineveh*.<sup>1</sup> How many of the numerous cities and regions mentioned in the *Iliad* had been visited by him cannot be guessed. What we find when continuous Hellenic history begins is that the states go to Homer ordinarily to find out something about their antecedents, of which they themselves have the vaguest of notions. Thus the name *Erechtheus* in the account of Athens in the *Catalogue* gave the Athenians great trouble. The discussion of the passage in the *Ion* of *Euripides*<sup>2</sup> takes us into the debating rooms of the archaeologists. *Erechtheus* is divided into two personages, one of them *Erichthonios*, "Indigenous," who belongs to the Trojan pedigree. By *Plato's* time there are three of him ; and *Erysichthon* "Land-protector" is his third incarnation.

<sup>1</sup> *Leges* 685 c.

<sup>2</sup> 265 foll.



From this we may reasonably infer that the Erechtheion was named after the passage in the Iliad, not that the author of the Iliad knew of the existence of such a place in Athens.

Geography is however one of the earliest needs of trade; and both statesmen and merchants have to compile or get compiled "books of roads and regions" for the requirements of their occupation. Dry as such books are likely to be, their compilers rarely fail to add some notes about the places which they mention, giving details of peculiar customs, or commemorating noteworthy events connected with the localities. To a collection of this sort it is likely that the Catalogue of Ships is indebted. Since the author deals with a mythical period, he has little occasion for accuracy. Still geographical features are not easily altered, whence some care had to be taken in such matters to be in accord with facts which were capable of verification.

What the education of those days was like is unknown. The reader of the Protagoras of Plato and of the Alkibiades I ascribed to him<sup>1</sup> is astonished to learn that there were no teachers of Greek yet, and to find this statement confirmed by Aristotle. It is clear that Homer did not at first recognize the existence of Greek dialects<sup>2</sup>; this is one of the matters wherein the Odyssey displays an advance of knowledge as compared with the Iliad. Yet even for him there was the *κοινή*, afterwards identified by Isokrates<sup>3</sup> with Attic, suitable for the prosaic iambic, and a sublimer style suitable for hexa-

<sup>1</sup> III a.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Il. iv. 437 with Od. xix. 175.

<sup>3</sup> Or. xv. § 296.



meters. This latter was not in Aristotle's opinion, it would seem, an archaic dialect, but the *κοινή* embellished with rare words and usages found in different parts of Hellas. The Tragedians follow Homer's example in making all their characters speak the same dialect, leaving it to Comedy to reproduce differences in this matter. Even if dialectic differences had been recognised by the author of the *Iliad*, he could not well have introduced them without making the Trojans speak a different language, which for many reasons would not be feasible.

Poetical composition involves various accomplishments, writing, versification, and at this time skill with the harp. Although one of the minstrels in the *Odyssey* claims that he is self-taught, the claim indicates that this was unusual ; the arts have to be acquired with the help of teachers.

Fame soon spreads, and the man who is successful in gratifying some tastes either attracts pupils or himself receives invitations from those whose wealth enables them to make it worth a man's while to migrate.<sup>1</sup> Thus a Frederic the Great, who fancied himself as a French poet, could afford to offer a home to Voltaire. More ordinarily the student has himself to take the trouble of migrating ; but even where such persons become immortal by their achievements, the names of those from whom they acquired the rudiments of their accomplishments are not likely to be remembered.

The technique of Homeric verse, whether hexametric or iambic, exhibits a degree of development which

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* xvii. 382.

indicates that both these metres had been in use for a considerable time. The art of writing, which also can only be acquired from teachers, was clearly a familiar accomplishment when the prologues were written ; and though there is evident truth in the theory of Herodotus that the later Hellenes derived their theology from Homer, it is quite evident that it was not all his own invention. Of that etymological theology which is to some extent expounded in the Cratylus of Plato more than the rudiments must have been taken over by Homer from earlier students of this subject ; for in the case of several deities he assumes it to be known. Athene is properly, as she still is often designated in his verse, *Athenaie*, goddess of Athens, Athenai, a city name, similar in formation to many more, Priene, Pyrene, Mykenai, etc. But the theological etymology recorded by Plato, ἀ θεία νόησις " the divine intelligence " is assumed ; to one who reflects, as the Scholia constantly point out, Athene is merely the *intelligence* of the person whose doings are recounted. The affiliation of Apollo and Artemis to Leto, based it would seem partly on the name Delphoi, interpreted as " brethren," partly on the function of shooting, obtained in the one case from the title Hekatos, in the other from the title Ephesie (goddess of Ephesos, but derived from ἔφεσις) is taken for granted. Hekatos is itself an inference from Hekatonnesoi (The Hundred Isles), which Strabo gravely tells us stands for Ἐκάτου νῆσοι " the Islands of Hekatos," according to a grammatical rule which he improvises for this occasion.<sup>1</sup> Not only has Hekatos

<sup>1</sup> P. 618.

been inferred, but the inconvenience which results from a deity having the name Furthest has been explained away; Furthest means one who can shoot furthest. It would seem too that Pelops had already been inferred from Peloponnesos, since he seems to come at the head of the pedigree of Agamemnon (Il. ii. 104); Pindar is still aware that Pelops began life as a duck (*i.e.* being inferred from Ducks' Isle), since he records the popular opinion that he met with the fate which usually befalls ducks, *viz.* being cooked, carved and eaten. If however the inference of Pelops is pre-Homeric, his affiliation to Tantalos is post-Homeric; that is due to the etymology of his name "approach face," the equivalent of which occurs in the anecdote of Tantalos.<sup>1</sup>

The affiliation of Zeus himself to the mysterious Kronos, though explained, is too frequently assumed to be known for us to doubt that it had already become part of the popular mythology. But all such matters have somehow to be learned before they can be known.

Just as the Poet himself is likely to have visited various localities, attracted by the fame of persons who had acquired celebrity for various accomplishments, so his own fame attracted the people of Ilion, when they were in search of some one to whom the task should be assigned of composing their national Epic. And thus the Iliad or Achilleid arose.

Ilion since the days of Schliemann has been the subject of archaeological investigation, which has indeed produced valuable results, but little that can be employed for the enucleation of accurate history. From the

<sup>1</sup> Od. xi. 583 προσεπέλαζε γενείωι.

commencement of continuous history in Hellas Troy or Ilion is in every one's mind ; Troy is to the Hellenes about what Canaan is to Jews and Christians. There is also this fact that is common : just as the two last named communities till recently derived all their knowledge of Canaanitish history from the Bible, so the Hellenes derive all that they know of Troy from Homer. In the case of Canaan indeed the modern study of epigraphy has been able to produce a little information from sources which were not open to earlier investigators. Some of the Biblical statements can be checked, others supplemented. But of Troy or Ilion, of the empire of Priam, no one outside the Iliad and Odyssey seems ever to have heard.

That the location of Troy is such that it might well have been a place of importance may of course be admitted ; yet there seems no reason why its location should do less for it in historic than in pre-historic times, and there is the fact that in spite of the fame which the Iliad secured for it, it never in historic times acquired any importance save that which it still possesses, that of having been the theatre of the greatest of all epics. Owing to the fiction which connected the Romans with Aeneas it had a good chance of becoming important when men who claimed descent from Aeneas were seated on the throne of the civilized world ; but this chance was never utilized. We have only Homer's authority for the supposition that when men were not as they are now it played a more distinguished part. When writers of the present day and of recent times speak of " Achilleus-poetry " or tales about Odysseus independent of the Iliad and Odyssey, they are begging a ques-

tion which they have no right to beg ; for the evidence is entirely against the existence of any such literature. Achilleus was created for the Trojan War, and Odysseus (except so far as he figures therein) for the Odyssey ; the events wherein they are supposed to have taken part are, as Aristotle says, not what did take place, but what might take place. The matter which accumulates round them afterwards is similar to that which accumulated round Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and was evolved by the same methods. No one ever knew anything about the three patriarchs except what was recorded in the Book of Genesis ; but by the use of etymology and combinations of various kinds it seemed possible to discover a great deal more : whence it was made out, *e.g.*, that Abraham's father was a dealer in idols, and that he went through an experience similar to that of the Three Holy Children. All this however was not knowledge, but conjecture.

Now though the ordinary Hellene probably swallowed the whole story of the Trojan War, critical writers such as Thucydides were aware that the Iliad could not really be taken as history. For the subject on which this historian consults it, *viz.*, the size of the armaments which the Greek cities could supply, its statements might deserve consideration ; but that sort of topic was far removed from questions of actual fact. The true inference to be drawn from the silence of all antiquity about Priam and his empire is that they were fictions ; the people of Ilion in Homer's time had no annals, whence the Poet had to go for his matter to Apollo and the Muses. The Sirens could supply information on the subject of the Trojan War even to those who had



taken the most prominent part therein, though it was not safe to attend their classes. They only, Apollo, the Muses and the Sirens, really knew anything about it.

And indeed the time when it took place was one when men were not as they are now. It belonged then to a period which was beyond all historical tradition ; for though Assyriology and Egyptology have acquainted us with human beings belonging to millennia before the time of Homer, however early we may place him, what appears from their monuments is that they were very like men as they are now. They had not indeed all the appliances which the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have invented ; but they were not much worse equipped than those who belonged to the centuries immediately before. Hence the *Iliad* records events belonging to a period which does not enter into history however far back it may eventually be traced ; and as it occasionally confesses, those events took place for the sole purpose of being turned into lays.

Ilion was evidently destroyed *after* Homer's time, for there was no continuous tradition connecting him with the place ; before continuous literature commences it had ceased to count as a state. On the other hand it must have been destroyed *before* his time and its ruins must have been occupied by some immigrants, whose rulers were a house of Aeneas. The *Iliad* assumes the ruin of the older city, and shows how its purpose was to install the Aenead dynasty in lieu of the " former "—which is probably the sense of the word " Pri-amid ". In the same way when Aeneas is brought to Italy by Vergil, it turns out that he really belongs to the country, since his ancestor Dardanus had migrated thence. So



too in the Egyptian and Persian forms of the Alexander legend that conqueror is proved to be an Egyptian and a Persian respectively.

Of the Greek immigrants all we know is that when Homer wrote they had Ionic Greek as their literary language, and were ruled by a house of Aeneas ; *i.e.* probably by a family whose head at the time was or recently had been named Aeneades ; for names of this style are not necessarily patronymics. This personage must have been less fond of flattery than the ordinary prince ; for whereas Vergil brings in Caesar before he has completed three hundred lines of his first book, the promise of the dominion of the Aeneadae is hidden away in book xx of the Iliad. (Nevertheless Aeneas is to a considerable extent the hero of the latter poem, as will be seen.) He desired, the preface to the Odyssey informs us, that the Poet should compose another poem on a Trojan theme, where perhaps the glories of Aeneas could be painted in brighter colours, or conceivably his own achievements be made to surpass those of Achilleus.

The name Troie, probably meaning "Threefold," is likely to have been the designation given by the immigrants. The name Ilion or Ilios belonged to the older city. Hence Troy might also be called New Ilion. It is connected with the hero Ilus, who may be identified with the Arabic Il, "god," whose name is found in numerous proper names, and besides in some S. Arabian inscriptions. It is the Arabic form of the deity whom the Phoenicians and Hebrews called El. One other Arabic name appears in the pedigree of Priam : Assaracus, fairly clearly the Arabic *ash-sharq* "the East" or "the

Sunrise," the equivalent of the Phoenician Kadmos. The Morn in the Greek appellation also figures in the Priamid pedigree. The "sons of the East" in both cases made of the East a human ancestor. The word *sharq* in this sense is found in both South and North Arabian; but the article prefixed is the N. Arabian.

Of some pre-historic immigration or immigrations from Arabia traces have been found in names which figure on the map of Asia Minor, and to some extent even on that of Hellas itself. The most striking is doubtless 'Αδραμύττιον, Adramyttium, whose identity with Hadramut does not seem doubtful. Abydos, found in the Iliad, cannot well be separated from the 'Abbūd of Arabia, and Larissa seems in ancient as in modern times to be an accommodation to European pronunciation of the Arabic al-'Arīsh "the Hut". Other nations have left traces of themselves in these regions also; the name Chalcis is clearly the Armenian word for "city," just as Amorion is the Armenian word for "fortress." Yet it would seem that in Homer's time little was remembered of these ancient settlements except their names. In his pre-historic Troy princes have Greek names indistinguishable from those of the Achæan invaders; Helene, who comes from Sparta, has a brother-in-law Helenos. Conceivably in the case of Paris, also called Alexandros, we have a foreign name with a Greek translation; but if this be so, it is altogether exceptional. The Poet then had no legends dating from the time of the Arabian invasion which he could utilize; all he knew was that there had been an ancient city, at some time burned,

and repopled by Greeks, whose chieftain in his time was Aeneades.

Yet though he gave the Asiatics Greek names he understood the difference between the European and the Asiatic character, and detected the causes which whenever the two continents have been brought into conflict have ordinarily determined the struggle in favour of the Europeans. His Priam is polygamous ; to a Greek prince he allows only one lawful wife. Laomedon has a European name, but behaves like an Asiatic ; he " defrauds the gods of their promised reward." The Greek host is orderly and quiet ; in the Asiatic all is disorder. The Asiatic spy, Dolon, gives away the secrets of his party so soon as he finds himself in danger.

Since the prefaces from their nature imply the existence of a sufficient number of authors to make plagiarism an offence against which it was desirable to guard, we are justified in supposing that to some extent the poems are based on written matter which the author had studied in previously existing books. There are some other cases wherein the arrival of a classic throws the whole of the existing literature into obscurity ; the example offered by Latin literature is the most familiar. The poets of the Augustan age spoiled the taste of the public for the works of their predecessors ; and if Homer had any predecessors, it would seem clear that the publication of his works caused them to share the same fate. But we may infer their existence with certainty from his assertion that his orders were to provide *reading matter for the sleepless*, for that, as has been seen, is what is the equivalent of his phrase in Aristotle's language. The sleepless person might have his book handy if he found

the need for Katharsis ; he could not well count on having a rhapsode at hand.

From the fact that the " Sorrows of Orpheus " are mentioned in the Preface to the Iliad, whereas this person receives no mention in the Poems, it may be reasonably inferred that either Orpheus was a historical personage, or at least that odes were current in Homer's time bearing his name.<sup>1</sup> There may then be some truth in the assertion of Clement of Alexandria that Homer borrowed from Orpheus, though he may be mistaken in his evidence.

It would be futile to endeavour to estimate the debt of Homer to authors whose existence is only inferred from these considerations. He may have borrowed much or little or nothing ; for the history of Troy in prehistoric times he is unlikely to have had any material. If for the chief Trojan hero he has to invent a Greek name, and that one taken from his function in the story, and a function whence, as will be seen, he could not actually have derived it, we may be quite clear that the Trojan War was not recorded in any documents, not even in the embroideries of the mythical Helen ; her theory that the supposed events only happened for the purpose of providing lays, *i.e.* that they were due to the imagination of the Poet and had no other source, is quite sound. Aristotle lays his finger on the difference between history and fiction when he says that the former is what has happened, the latter what might happen. Composing the latter is a very different process from recounting the former. When Homer was selected to

<sup>1</sup> Euripides makes the pre-historic Hippolytus study the work of Orpheus. Hippol. 953.

compose a book for each letter of the alphabet on the story of Troy, it is unlikely that he asked the Trojans whence he was to get his material ; he must get it, they would have replied, from Apollo and the Muses. Had those who endeavoured to supplement his works had any access to actual materials which Homer himself might have used, they would not (practically) have contented themselves with piecing together bits of information out of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and repeating the incidents which they found therein only attached to other names. But we find that the task of providing ancient history for persons and communities who had none was set in far later than Homeric times. When men reached distinction in the Islamic states, there was never any difficulty about providing them with pedigrees ; there was the convenience that their original ancestors were certainly to be found in the Bible ; only some intervening links had to be invented.

The argument that the War was too big an affair for any one to have invented appears to rest on the illusion which the Poet has succeeded in creating. It lasted for just the period which the *Iliad* covers ; a certain number of days, which perhaps cannot be exactly made out. Similarly a picture covers the number of square inches which the canvas contains ; but with skill it can be made to simulate hundreds of square miles. The author presents it as having just begun or having lasted ten years—with perhaps another ten years of preparation—according as best suits his design. The heroes require time to win their reputations ; Achilleus must have done sufficient to earn his popularity among the troops, else there will be no sympathy felt for him when he is out-



raged ; Odysseus must be a *vir pietate gravis et meritis*, or he will not be able to suppress a mutiny by his personality. And what is most important of all, the exploit of Achilles, and Hector who reflects his glory, implies a lengthy period of failure, or rather of tension, or we shall be unable to appreciate its magnificence. Pindar says well that exploits which involve no risks win no honour on either sea or land. But if we come too near the picture we find the ten or twenty years collapse. An ungallant inquiry would be instituted into the age of Helen herself, and (in the *Odyssey*) into that of her daughter Hermione. The mode whereby the Achaean army maintained itself for ten years would also occasion serious difficulty ; Napoleon was unable to find food for the host with which he invaded Russia even for a few months. Moreover after ten years' struggles the Achaean army was all but intact. But all considerations of this sort belong to the procedure of dissecting a statue. The War is an expedient for one purpose, and its protraction an expedient for another.

That the names of the Greek heroes were taken from the supposed ancestry of the families who in Homer's time were supreme in different states is conceivable, but the evidence (as has been seen) appears to be against it. It appears from both Herodotus<sup>1</sup> and an inscription recorded by Aeschines<sup>2</sup> that the Athenians learned the name of Menestheus, their king at the time of the events in the *Iliad*, from Homer ; yet these people who claimed autochthony<sup>3</sup> ought surely to have had a tradition about him among themselves, if he had been anything but a

<sup>1</sup> vii. 161.

<sup>2</sup> 3. § 185.

<sup>3</sup> Herodotus, l.c.



Homeric creation. Nestor and his father Neleus seem to have functional names ; the latter is the equivalent of Merciless, and is probably taken from the unscrupulous nature of Nestor's plan ; the name Nestor seems to be " Plotter " but slightly disguised. His age is not a historical fact, even exaggerated ; it is derived from the part which he plays in the story. He has to be of such authority that he can give humiliating advice to the chief of the expedition ; hence he must have acquired such authority by his exploits in the past. He must be past the age when he can be jealous of another hero's fame ; a man in the prime of life would not readily assume that Achilles—not to speak of a sham Achilles—could do what he could not. As Aristotle says, the qualities are taken on for the benefit of the story, and not *vice versa* ; the expedient which forms the main plot of the Iliad requires Nestor, and hence Nestor comes into existence, having precisely those qualities which enable him to serve his purpose, and no more. Where anecdotes are reported in the Iliad which do not belong to its story, they are not fragments of history which the author is anxious to preserve, in the style of Herodotus ; they are required for the defence of some point in the work which would otherwise be exposed to attack. It is therefore probable that the author, having to compose the Lays of Ilion, had no fact before him except the two which we have seen, viz., that there had been an earlier city, at some time destroyed, and that it had been rebuilt and repeopled by colonists whose head was an Aeneades.

The discovery of Indian literature brought home one fact which might well have escaped notice : viz. that the use of writing may be highly developed, yet it may

occur to no one to employ it for recording events. But it is by no means necessary to study Sanskrit in order to envisage the attitude of the Trojans when they desired some one to compose their national chronicle. In recording the case submitted by Edward I. of England to the Pope when he claimed the homage of Scotland, Milman observes<sup>1</sup> that he did so in "a document which seemed to presume on the ignorance or credulity of his Holiness as to the history of England and the world with boldness only equalled by the counter-statements of the Scottish Regency. It is a singular illustration of the state of human knowledge when poetry and history are one, when the mythic and historic have the same authority even as to grave legal claims and questions affecting the destiny of nations." But even some centuries later a mythical History of Scotland was excogitated, with a series of a hundred kings.<sup>2</sup>

If the *Iliad* did not itself contain the reason for the invention of the Trojan War, it might be supposed to preserve some fragment of history ; but the main idea of the Poem, which is merely the praise of a Man, involves it. The greatness of Achilles can only be proved by his succeeding where others fail ; these others cannot be nobodies, but must themselves be persons of distinction ; hence the idea of a great expedition arises. But the great expedition must have some counterpoise on the other side ; hence Troy becomes the metropolis of an empire. The sole result is the political purpose with which the *Iliad* was composed : at New Ilion a descendant of Aeneas reigns in lieu of a descendant of

<sup>1</sup> History of Latin Christianity, 1903, vii. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Burton, History of Scotland, iii. 415 (ed. 1876).

Priam. The Achaeans come and go away again ; the consequence of their vast undertaking is merely the legitimization of the existing dynasty of Troy. In the sequel, as sketched in the *Odyssey*, most of them reach home and "live happily ever afterwards." If Agamemnon is murdered on his arrival, that is simply and solely for the sake of the plot of the *Odyssey* ; it in the first place provides a suitable encomiast for the Woman who is to be praised, in the second place for the education of Odysseus, and in the third for the education of Telemachos. It is an *expedient*, and a very effective one, just as the Trojan War is itself an expedient ; but both are creations of the Poet and belong neither to history nor legend.

Whatever literature the Poet of Ios may have perused, we may feel clear that chronicles deserving the name did not figure therein. Yet that there was a considerable amount of written matter before him may be safely inferred from the hidden prefaces. Literary property must have been a familiar institution before such care could be taken to elude the plagiarist.

The same fact is indicated by the meticulous care which the author takes to furnish replies to objections. This matter will be treated later on ; the inference which we draw from it here is that there must have been critics, ready like those of our own time to pounce on anything which seemed to them to display weakness. Now their presence is only intelligible in a literary community, which has had sufficient experience of poems and the like to demand a good article. One would not like to suggest that the people of Troy had a "Critical Review," but that there were among them readers with sharp wits

may be asserted on the evidence before us ; and the account of the Barrow in Iliad xxiii. implies the study or archaeology.

Much of the keenness with which these studies were pursued may be attributed to the influence exercised by Aeneades himself, whose reign appears to have lasted for the whole period wherein the Iliad was composed and some time after. At least the apology which we find in the Preface to the Odyssey for rejecting the theme suggested by this person implies as much as this. As has been seen, Homer here says much the same as Vergil and Horace say at a later date ; they would gladly have celebrated the exploits of Caesar, only Apollo forbade it. *Aude Caesaris invicti res dicere, multa laborum Praemia laturus*. By the veto of Apollo they signify (at any rate among other things) that history is not poetry ; for in history the actions are the product of the characters, whereas in fiction (which is the true sense of the word poetry) the characters are expedients for the actions. Statius is not worthy as a poet to be classed with these ; but he experiences the same veto. *Tempus erit*, he says to his emperor, *cum Pierio tua fortior oestro Facta canam* ; for the present he cannot undertake it. He finishes the Thebaid and is regarded as a second Amphion. Once again he makes his emperor wait. He must supplement Homer's Achilleis first. Had Homer composed an epic on the exploits of Aeneades, he would probably have laid posterity under no obligation, on the ground that the work would not have got beyond Ilion, and would have perished with the city.

Still a prince who offers rewards for the celebration of his exploits in verse must have literary tastes, and the

influence which such a potentate can exercise is very great. The political philosophers of the East, who had great experience of autocrats, hold that the tastes of the subjects are dictated by those of the prince ; if he is a great builder, architecture becomes the fashionable topic of conversation ; if he is a devotee, men who meet each other discuss religious services. We may then plausibly conjecture that it was through the influence of Aeneades that the people of New Ilion commissioned a poet to make a poem on their past.

The statement that the number of Books was the choice of the people of the city, and that they chose 24, is of the highest interest. Doubtless this number was suggested to them by the letters of the alphabet ; at a later time the number of the Jewish Sacred Books is made out to be 24, in recollection of the Greek alphabet, or 22 in recollection of the Hebrew. A community which could order a work on such a scale must, one would fancy, have had considerable experience of literary productions ; and unless writing materials were far cheaper than they were in later times, the actual cost of production must have been very considerable, apart from the Poet's honorarium, which we have no means of assessing, but which is not likely to have been negligible.

There appears to be no evidence for the story which Plato repeats of the Poet having to wander about in search of patronage. On the contrary, since the Poet could afford to reject the proposal of the prince, it is likely that he was possessed of a competence such as enabled him to carry out his god's command. And the second Poem has been rightly described as a supplement to the first, in that the interest which the first excited



in a whole number of personages was to some extent gratified by what it records. Those narratives have indeed, as will be seen, their place in the narrative of the *Odyssey*, and are required for the working out of its plot ; but advantage is taken to the full of the fact that the audience could not hear enough about the fortunes of the heroes whom they had learned to love and admire. The work is indeed the natural supplement to the *Iliad* in the sense that whereas everything in the *Iliad* leads up to the praise of a *man*, in the *Odyssey* everything leads up to the praise of a *woman*.

The assertion of Lucian that many thought the *Odyssey* to have been composed before the *Iliad* may well be true. The earlier poem according to the usual supposition, confirmed as has been seen by the deciphered Prefaces, contains the mention of not a few characters, whose function is only to be understood from the latter. Telemachos, Laertes, the son of Achilleus, Klytaemnestra, who are just mentioned in the *Iliad*, play leading parts in the *Odyssey*, and some of their names have the appearance of being functional. Since we are unable to entertain the hypothesis that these names were furnished by any tradition, it would seem that the plot of the *Odyssey* had been thought out before the *Iliad* was produced. And it is noticeable that Odysseus, though in the *Iliad* he is called the man of expedients and wiles, who can bring any one through burning fire, does little in that poem to justify his reputation ; he is an able officer, eager for adventures, and not easily discouraged, but exhibits no special astuteness or cunning. That is left for Nestor.

It is time now to sum up the amount which the Pre-



faces have taught us. In some ways they have *untaught* more than they have taught. They show us that Plato, Isokrates, and Aristotle were right in their view of the Poems, whereas Wolf and his followers are altogether mistaken in theirs. One Homer of Ios composed 24 Books at the request of the people of New Ilion, and afterwards by command of Apollo composed 24 more. These he wrote in that Ionic alphabet which owing to the popularity of his works presently displaced the others.

Still besides this we get a glimpse of an earlier Greek civilization than any other monuments attest. In a ruined Arabian settlement, repopled by Greek settlers, there is a literary court, possessed of a copious literature since forgotten, where men study, criticize, and plagiarize. New Ilion has behind it a catastrophe, and is soon itself to be overwhelmed by another ; for a certain period it enjoys prosperity under a dynasty which claims descent from an Aeneas, whom a Poet can show to have been the legitimate heir of the older sovereigns. Its career is meteoric ; but the material which it dropped proved more valuable than that which meteors ordinarily deposit.

## CHAPTER IV

### ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF FICTION

THE great difference that there is between the group of arts to which poetry, music and dancing belong, and those of the limner and the sculptor, is indicated by Isokrates in his *Euagoras*,<sup>1</sup> where he observes that a statue can only be in one place at a time, whereas a written description can circulate in an unlimited number of places. Another side of the same truth is to be found in the remark of Plato that such works as those of Homer and Hesiod<sup>2</sup> are immortal. What distinguishes the two groups is that the one is free from matter, and therefore independent of time and space, whereas the other is attached to it, and so confined to one place and limited by time. To some extent in our age these limits can be overcome by photography and operations based upon it.

Poetry—which is nearly identical according to Aristotle with fiction—is simulation *throughout*, because unlike history it is not a record of fact, and unlike painting it is not confined to one portion of space and time. The difference then between fiction and history appears in the initial definition. We may now collect what is said elsewhere in the *Poetics* about the difference between the two, and thus elucidate the concept of *Unity* which is characteristic of fiction.

The test of unity is—supposing anything were omitted,

<sup>1</sup> § 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Symposium* 209 b.

would it be missed ? If its withdrawal would impair the fabric, then there is unity. If anything might be withdrawn without the loss being felt, that element is clearly a unit for itself and no part of the other.

It is in accordance with this need for unity that the scale of the work of art is settled immediately after the subject has been selected. This is clearly put in the Preface to the *Odyssey* : Apollo bids the Poet compose an entertaining work which is not to be about War ; and then names as the subject Odysseus. The Poet is then told the size ; the same number of Chapters as the *Iliad* has, where however that had been the choice of the prince and people of Ilion. The same process takes place when a picture is ordered ; first the subject is chosen, and then the size is determined. This is a necessity in both cases ; for proportion must be maintained. Four books can be devoted to the earlier adventures of Odysseus when there are 24 for the whole work ; but if a smaller scale had been chosen they would have had to be reduced accordingly. In a historical work this question of scale is not altogether neglected, but is settled on various grounds besides the artistic idea of proportion. An author who starts a prolix work like Sismondi's *Histoire des Français* need not know at the start into how many volumes it will run. Where a work is based on documents of different sizes, its magnitude will vary to some extent with these ; thus it would be impossible for a historian of Hellas to write at the same length on Hellas in the eighth century B.C. as on Hellas in the fifth century B.C., because he has the scantiest material for the former period and fairly copious material for the latter. Further if like Ennius he takes

in contemporary history, he can add on books as events take place.

There are authors of fiction belonging to recent times who are said to have boasted of not wasting a word, in the sense that every sentence occurring within the work was required for the working out of the story. In such cases it is clear that the author must begin at the end no less than at the beginning ; for the final chapters will explain for what purpose the fictions found in the first chapters were excogitated. Just as the final matter would be unexplained without the initial, so the initial would be pointless without the final.

The first difference to be noticed between fiction and history is that the former has real beginnings and ends, the latter only such as are arbitrary and conventional. For even where a series of events can be circumscribed in space and time, such as the French Revolution or the English Civil War, the careers of the chief agents are not circumscribed by the same limits. Hence it is not quite easy to say when such events actually begin or actually end. Their causes go back to infinity, and their consequences stretch out into an infinite future. But in fiction there are real beginnings and ends, because the characters live only for the time that the romance lasts. Of the real person we perhaps see and hear no more than meets our senses of the fictitious person ; but in the former case there is an infinity behind, whereas in that of the fictitious person there is nothing behind. One who attempts to discover anything more about the character of fiction than the novelist has chosen to record is like one who tries to dissect a statue, expecting to find heart or liver. The statue does not possess those organs,

because it is *simulation* ; and likewise the character of fiction had no past and has no future.

Thus the resemblance between a character of fiction and a statue or picture is very close ; in both cases there is feigning, the production of a little which is to suggest a great deal. Just as a human being does not consist merely of certain lines and colours, so his career is not made up of the deeds and speeches of a few days ; the artistic power in either case lies in making that little suggest the rest. The wax-work is inartistic because it gives too much ; and the same was Aristotle's verdict on those works wherein the life of an imaginary hero was traced from the cradle to the grave.

Hence when Aristotle speaks of a beginning as that before which there need necessarily be nothing and of an end as that which need necessarily be followed by nothing, this remark goes to the root of the difference between history and fiction. In a biography or a group of biographies (which we call a chronicle) we have not the whole of the man or men ; the most copious and trustworthy autobiography could only furnish a small fraction of his experiences. Most of these experiences—or at any rate a large portion of them—would have been in contact with other men, each of whom would have had his own history and infinity of experiences. But the character of fiction can begin life at maturity or old age ; and when he has left the stage there is nothing more of him. He passes away without death as easily as with it. There is no corpse, not even a handful of ashes, left to testify to his having lived. He has a real beginning and a real end, because he starts from nothing and vanishes into nothing.



That when the fictitious agent has been invented in order to carry out a definite expedient the Poet is likely to provide him with a past may be admitted ; but the amount of it will very largely depend on the importance of the function which gives rise to his existence. A real Thersites would have had parents and a home, possibly a wife and family, no less than Agamemnon and Odysseus ; but as he is called into existence for a single occasion only, to carry out the function whence he gets his name—Brazen-face, or Mob-orator—there was no occasion to provide him with any of these accessories ; his life is confined to one scene. Pherekydes, it appears, was able to provide him with parents, and distinguished ones : he was the son of Agrios (*Iliad* ix. 117) and Dia, daughter of Porthaon. He also knew how Thersites became lame ; his cousin Meleager had thrown him from a precipice, because he had displayed cowardice in the fight with the Kalydonian boar. This important information is doubtless acquired from the occurrence in the Kalydonian genealogy of the names *Μελέαγρος*, *Μέλας*, and *Πορθεύς*, which suggest the “ destruction of limbs ” ; lameness is caused by a fall from a height, as we know from the story of Hephaestos. Most likely then Thersites belonged to this family, and acquired his deformity in this way. This is a characteristic example of the statue-dissecting which was executed by those who followed Homer ; but even the Scholiast observes that it is infelicitous. Arktinos made him earn his death at the hands of Achilles by upbraiding him on the subject of Penthesilea. Achilles would not have soiled his hands in this way. Where, however, an agent is repeatedly employed, and requires a considerable group



of qualities, then he needs something of a past, and the Poet provides him with so much as is requisite. Hence we are told the names of the parents of Achilles and Hektor; but we do not know how Achilles came to have a son.

The characters also do not ordinarily need a future, for that does not ordinarily affect the part which they have to play. If the fate of Achilles is foretold in the *Iliad*, the reason is that the tale must end with his re-marriage to Briseis; unless therefore he is to be killed before Troy is taken, that event will be deferred till the return home (*Iliad* xix. 298). That Troy itself is to be taken is, as will be seen, due to the function of Hektor wherewith the whole Poem starts. The future of Aeneas is also a matter which goes deep into the foundations of the whole. That is its political starting-point, just as the death of Hektor is its artistic starting-point.

How far the Poet had contemplated the future of his chief agents (apart from those who have been mentioned) when the *Iliad* was composed cannot easily be made out. Apparently something terrible was going to happen to Diomed (v. 414), but the Poet afterwards thought better of it. The final careers of the heroes as told in the *Odyssey* are in the main due to the needs of that work.

To select a pre-historic period for his Poem was therefore an act of genius on the Poet's part. For thereby that conflict with actual history which comes about when historic times are selected is avoided. There is indeed very little reason for supposing that there was any recorded history wherewith he could either agree

or disagree ; but the names of a few persons at least, who had lived within the memory of man, would be known in various places. More however than a couple of generations are required to transform the race from giants into dwarfs. When a poet or novelist brings his fictitious agents into touch with real (historic) agents, there is serious danger of misleading ; this, it is said, has happened in the case of one at least of the novels of Scott, and one of his Epics. The Syriac romance of Julian the Apostate has found its way into serious chronicles.

That owing to the absence of other history the *Iliad* became the main source of it to the Hellenes and their successors is a result for which, however flattering it might be to Homer, he is scarcely responsible. The sole link which he established between the heroic age and his own is in the family of Aeneas ; on other cities besides Troy he bestows heroes, but he gives—unless the prophecy to Telemachos be an exception<sup>1</sup>—no hint that their descendants are in possession of the thrones whereon those heroes sat. The whole story is as much out of time as are the incidents in the lives of the gods : the date of the Trojan War is no more to be fixed than is the year wherein Leto gave birth to Phoebus or Artemis. Even if there were chronicles going back to early times, there would be no contradiction between their statements and those in the Poems : for the whole dispensation had passed away. And this is in agreement with what, we have already seen, is to be inferred from the names of the Trojan agents. If there had been any actual chronicles (or anything analogous to them)

<sup>1</sup> *Od.* xv. 534.

wherein the history of the old Arabian settlement was recorded, there would at least have been a sufficient supply of historical names to render it unnecessary to invent such obvious fictions as Hektor, Laomedon, or Erichthonios. Silius Italicus may not know many Punic names, but he at least knows those of Hannibal, Hanno, and Hasdrubal. But that was because there were records of the Punic War, which in consequence was no more suited to be the subject of a Poem than the Chronicles of Rome, which were versified in what a German critic calls the immortal work of Ennius.

Unity then, just as it is inclusive, so it is exclusive. Just as within the piece there should be nothing which is not part of it, so it should be attached by nothing to that continuous group of events which constitutes history. For its agents begin as ideas, which are outside space and time, and afterwards turn into personalities. In the space and time which real history occupies there is no room for them; they can only be admitted by the displacement of others who actually occupy the area. Hence they should have either a space or a time of their own; either belong to countries of which no one has ever heard or live in a time when men were not as they are now. Some brilliant romancers of our time have chosen the former method; Homer selected the latter in the case of *Iliad*, whereas in the *Odyssey* he to some extent adopts the former also. The combination of the fictitious country with the real country gives no little trouble in the latter work; it is not clear how Odysseus gets into Fairyland out of the Aegean Sea, and wonderful expedients have to be devised to bring him back from Fairyland into Ithaka. He has to be

fast asleep during the whole of the voyage (xiii. 80), just as in a modern detective story he would be drugged. Steps have also to be taken to ensure that the Phaeakians do not make the same voyage again. Otherwise there might be a run on this delightful country where a casual visitor obtains more in the way of presents than his whole share in the spoils of Troy.

✓ The second difference is that whereas history deals with acts and their consequences, fiction deals with situations and expedients. In history the cause comes before the effect; and since politics and even private affairs are highly complicated, serious mistakes are made in both. But in fiction the work starts from the ultimate situation, and the expedients for producing it have to be thought out. Expedients as a rule require other expedients to remove the difficulties which they occasion; whence (as will be seen in the case of the two Poems) a simple situation may lead to the production of a lengthy work.

The expedients of fiction are in the main human agents; and this leads us to the side of this particular difference on which Aristotle lays stress. The needs of the situation require persons with special qualities whether of the heart or mind; belonging to special classes of society; prepared for the task which is to be set them. Hence the expedients create the characters; and the "character" of fiction is simply an expression for the group of qualities best suited for the production of some particular effect. Some one in the *Iliad* is wanted to masquerade as Achilles, using that hero's armour, and for the purpose of the plot he must be some one whose death Achilles will be bound to avenge. This group

of requirements is what makes up Patroklos ; for they dictate a whole number of qualities the want of any of which will disqualify him for his part. Unless he is vain of his personal prowess, he will not hope (even disguised as Achilles) to succeed where every one else failed ; and it is also necessary that he should be vain or he will not by overdoing his part meet with his death. But in such a hero as one of the two Aias the vanity would have prevented him from masquerading as Achilles ; he would not be prepared to recognize that Achilles was so vastly superior to himself. Hence an expedient must be found in the circumstances of Patroklos to overcome this difficulty ; and the same expedient will also make it probable that Achilles will be willing to lend Patroklos his armour. That out of the qualities which the expedient requires the novelist should be able to produce the semblance of a historical character is an indication of his skill. Only Patroklos does not thereby become a historical character, who must have lived at a particular time, and gone through the thousand and one vicissitudes which befall the human being. There was never more of him than Homer chose to create.

The difficulty of introducing historical characters into fiction is connected with this consideration. If the "character" be created with the view to some expedient or other, he can be provided with precisely the qualities which suit that expedient ; there are doubtless limits set by historical probability, but the author's choice is very wide. If however a historical character be adopted, and employed for a fictitious expedient, it is likely that he will either have too many qualities or too few. He will be like an old instrument accommo-



dated to a new use, which is unlikely to be as effective as one which has been fabricated for that particular employment. The difficulties which meet Aristotle in the fact that the great mass of tragedies dealt with personages generally believed to be historical, whose careers could not seriously be altered, disappear when we recognize a matter which most curiously escaped him : viz., that the Tragedies were Homeric Miracle-plays, having for their object to render the Iliad and the Odyssey more vivid ; whence the Greek tragedian was not altogether in the position of the independent author of fiction.

If the characters of the Tragedies began, as Aristotle supposes in the case of the Iphigeneia in Tauri, as species, not as known individuals, the principle of unity would probably be found in them to a far greater extent than that which we actually find. If Kassandra in the Agamemnon had been invented for the drama, her appearance therein would have led to some result ; she would have been an expedient, and so been furnished with the qualities required for the work which she was to do. Clearly however she effects nothing : she is therefore introduced because the work is reproduction of Holy Scripture, where Kassandra is with Agamemnon at his death and shares his fate. That she was a prophetess was an inference taken over from the Apocrypha, *i.e.*, the Cyclic supplements, which doubtless drew it from her performance in Iliad xxiv. 699, coupled with the fact that her brother Helenos was a prophet, whereas the rest of her story was made out from the statement (Iliad i. 72) that prophecy was the gift of Apollo, who doubtless expected a *quid pro quo* for the gift. Being a



prophetess she should behave like one when a massacre is about to take place ; and the proper behaviour could be learned from that of Theoklymenos when the massacre of the suitors was about to commence (Od. xx. 350). Hence the theory of starting in the abstract, *i.e.*, with a situation which requires a prophetess, who presently materializes as *Kassandra*, has no application here ; the scene reproduced from the sacred book already contains *Kassandra*, and another scene in the sacred book indicates what she will say. And the magnificent success of Aeschylus in his treatment of the matter shows that the Unity of Fiction can be safely neglected in a miracle-play.

Difficult as is Aristotle's phrase *πρᾶξις τελεία*, for the interpretation of which we cannot reject the guidance of the *Metaphysics*, where it is identified with *εὐδαιμονία*, as it is in the *Poetics*, we may at least regard this form of unity as one side of it. There may for all we know be a purpose in human affairs ; if there be one, it is on a scale too vast for the human mind to comprehend. Where however we are dealing with a limited time, we can rarely be clear that events are working towards a particular end, and, if we assume such to be the case, we have to make allowance for many a cross-current ; and where men set before themselves a particular end, in numerous cases they never attain it. But in fiction both the final and the initial situation are known from the start ; we know at the start that *Odysseus* is to recover his throne and his queen from 118 suitors, and that at the commencement he is single-handed ; and what have to be devised are expedients leading by true causation from the initial to the final situation. When that final

situation is reached, Odysseus dissolves ; he was put together for a particular purpose, and when that purpose has been accomplished he is no more.

Odysseus is not then a historical or legendary personage who, after losing everything regained everything ; but a combination of the qualities which in the first place cause him to lose all his followers and possessions, and then to regain them. Those qualities seem contradictory ; but what Homer assumes—perhaps without sufficient ground—is that a man can profit by experience. The mistakes which caused his original losses are avoided when the time comes for him to commence restoring his fortunes. Other qualities he does not require.

The character of fiction therefore bears a fairly close resemblance to the piece in a game, which for the time that the game lasts is equipped with a sort of life. For the purpose of the game it is armed with certain powers, and within it it has a history ; but when the game is over it becomes a piece of wood or card. In fiction the varieties of character which can be introduced are as unlimited as they are in real life ; only there are rules connected with their grouping which are derived from experience, and there may even be conventions which cannot easily be violated. The rules for character which Aristotle gives to some extent coincide with these limitations. In real life those who have given evidence of certain qualities do not always display them ; a real Achilles might have forbore to avenge Patroklos, and a real Hektor might have taken refuge within the city. But in fiction such accidents cannot be admitted ; no plot could be constructed unless the acts were in accordance with the characters. They are therefore *assumptions*

just as in chess it is assumed that a Knight can only move in one way and a Castle in another.

Whether the novelist really sketches out his story in the abstract before he assigns names or realizes his characters before he constructs his story is a question which would be answered differently by different artists. That Aristotle has probed the secret of the Homeric Poems by this doctrine seems clear. For it can be shown in numerous cases that the expedient gives rise to the agent. Some one is wanted to remove Hektor from the battlefield in Book vi. What sort of man can do it? One qualification will be the prophetic gift; such a man can authoritatively advise. But this is not quite sufficient; as the example of Kalchas shows, a prophet who tells a prince what is unwelcome will run serious risk. Hence he had better be Hektor's brother also, and a warrior; combining the three qualities he may succeed in persuading Hektor. After a time his presence will be superfluous, and endanger the plot; so a means must be found for getting rid of him.

The questions to be asked in connexion with each agent and each incident are therefore obvious: Why is this agent wanted, and why is the incident invented? A satisfactory answer will consist in detecting the point in the story at which that agent's intervention is vital, and seeing how his other operations indicate the qualities which he requires for this vital occasion. Where several tasks of primary importance can be performed by the same agent, plurality is avoided; the Poet is economical. For indeed repetition is curiously convincing; in the *Odyssey* we hear of Agamemnon's death so often that we find it hard to recognize that that matter is merely

a part of the fiction of the *Odyssey*, and is neither history nor legend; that Agamemnon really died when the *Iliad* was finished, just as the Trump Card ceases to be a trump when the game is over. Hence Nestor is allowed to intervene twice for the sake of discharging vital functions; but his extreme age which is precisely what is required for these services renders him unfit to act when a more vigorous agent is required; therefore he must have a junior colleague in Odysseus. The reasons for doubling Helenos with Polydamas are equally cogent, though they are quite different. The skill of the author is exhibited in making these duplicate characters so different that there is no chance of their being confused. Most notably is this the case with Helen and Briseis. The latter is the person of real importance for the Poem, whereas Helen only arises out of the need for the single combat: but whereas Helen is painted brilliantly, Briseis is little better than a mute. By way of compensation the seizure of Briseis is brought into connexion with the really important person, Aeneas. It was because Aeneas took refuge in Lyrnessos that Achilles sacked that city, and carried off Briseis, that all the events in the *Iliad* could take place. Aeneas fled from Achilles on that occasion, but thereby he became founder of the dynasty of Troy.

Aristotle's doctrine that the character delineated must be good is often crossed by his other canon that it must be appropriate. In a Platonic dialogue (the *Hippias Minor*) it is rather amusingly shown that Achilles is as shifty as Odysseus. And indeed he makes statements which are quite inconsistent according to his mood. When he wishes to give a plausible excuse

for not coming to the aid of the Achaeans, he asserts that he has learned from his mother that if he stays and fights, he will never return home (ix. 412). But when he is alone with Patroklos, and the latter reminds him of his statement, he declares that he pays no attention to any such oracle, and does not believe in its authenticity (xvi. 36, 50 foll.) ; and when he is by himself he admits that there was such an oracle, but that it was so worded that its sense was most obscure (xviii. 8-10). The oracle was that while Achilles remained alive the best of the Myrmidons should fall by Trojan hands. Since Achilles was without doubt the best of the Myrmidons, it would most likely mean that though Achilles died, he would still be rendered immortal by the fame he had acquired. But it might mean various other things. Hence according to his mood he attaches importance to it or does not attach importance to it, and interprets it of himself or of some one else. Now to make Achilles keep away from the fighting line because if he fights he may be killed is to charge him with cowardice ; a soldier must surely be prepared to face death. Consequently when he alleges this and his love of life as his reason for holding back, he cannot be serious, in spite of his ostensible detestation of people who say one thing and mean another (ix. 312). And indeed the intention which he manifests in the ninth Book involves the very highest courage ; he means to wait till the Trojans have put all the Achaeans but himself out of action, when he will defeat them single-handed (654).

Naturally we do not follow the author of the *Hippias Minor* in making Achilles as shifty as Odysseus ; but



when a man sacrifices great interests to the gratification of a private passion, it is natural that he should find some plausible excuse for doing so ; and he may under these circumstances assume that an oracle means something which under other circumstances he would not take it to mean. He may further profess to attach importance to an oracle, to which in fact he attaches none ; just as Horace on a certain occasion could not possibly offend the Jews by violating "the thirtieth Sabbath," though at other times he was indifferent to their feelings. Meanwhile we may observe that the oracle is itself a masterpiece. For the best of the Myrmidons was Achilleus, yet not the real Achilleus, who skulked in his tent, but the sham Achilleus, who saved the Achæan fleet and host from destruction. He met his death while the other lived.

- If there is to be unity in a piece it seems clear that the process of working backwards from the final situation is the only process whereby it can be attained. One who plans a journey to a particular place works out his route on the same principle ; if on his way to Bombay he goes first to Suez, it is because he knows that there is a route from Suez to Bombay. Hence the Poet in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* knows at the beginning all that will happen till the end. In the second Book of the former he is acquainted with the Battle of the River which is described in Book xxi. He incurs the danger of anachronism ; in v. 27 it looks as though Athene in speaking to Diomed of the mist which formerly was on his eyes is thinking of vi. 128 where he fancies Glaukes may be a god, and, though in Book v. he has fought with two deities, Aphrodite and Ares, declares that he could



not think of fighting with one of the immortals ! The contradiction is however too glaring to be unintentional ; the purpose is to emphasize the *deus ex machina* required for the seizure of the horses of Aeneas. When Diomed accomplishes this marvel, he is wounded ; but in xi. 399 when he is wounded he retires from the field. Obviously then it is not Diomed who gets the better of Aeneas, but a god who for the purpose takes possession of him ; when the god has left him, he is wholly unconscious of the wonderful experience through which he has passed ; he is like a medium recovered from a trance. Hence in Books ix. and xiv. when he insists on his performances, he does not refer to his defeat of the immortals, but to far less notable achievements.

It was not then because certain fictitious heroes had undergone tragic experiences that they were made the subject of tragedies ; but because the choice of the Tragedian was limited to the persons who played a part of some sort in Holy Scripture and the Apocrypha (if we may apply that term to the Cyclic supplements). In such a drama as the *Philoktetes* the interest lies entirely in the presentation of Homeric personages ; that presentation leads to a result which would be historically false, since *Philoktetes* did return from Lemnos to Troy and take part in the War, as we learn from the *Odyssey*, or at least may infer with a high degree of probability. Therefore the *deus ex machina* must be called in. Hence the leading idea of Greek tragedy is not favourable to that unity which characterizes the Homeric fiction and any other that is constructed on the same principle. The author who creates his characters for the purpose of solving a problem cannot need to have recourse to a

*deus ex machina*, unless the problem selected be beyond his powers ; for his business is to find adequate expedients for the result wherewith he starts ; and he may create any characters he may desire, provided they come within the range of experience, in order to compass it. Homer has a problem of great difficulty to settle when he has to compel Achilles to return to the field ; but he has found natural expedients for dealing with it.

Just as Aristotle's theory of Unity, which is based on the Homeric Poems, breaks down if applied to the Tragedies, so do his rules for character. There are dramas wherein no single character can be described as good ; in the *Orestes*, *e.g.*, they are all (with the exception of quite unimportant persons) atrocious. Hence there can be no appeal in such dramas to that sympathy with suffering virtue which can be aroused in most audiences. The appeal must therefore be of a different sort ; and it probably is to the intellectual interest in the solving of a Homeric problem. *Orestes*, we know from the *Odyssey*, returned and put *Aegisthos* to death ; how did he do it ? To this question the dramas called *Elektra* and the *Choephoroe* furnish replies. That *Orestes* put his mother to death is known not indeed from the *Odyssey*, but from the *Apocrypha* ; how did his subjects, or rather fellow-citizens, regard this act, and how did he escape the consequences of their disapproval of it ? No moral lesson is to be derived from the solution of such problems ; the Euripidean gods are as unscrupulous as Euripidean men. *Agave* who worships *Dionysus* receives no more consideration at his hands than *Pentheus* who reviles him.

The relation of the *Odyssey* to the *Iliad* is very different

from that of the dramas to both. Its problem is not suggested by the earlier work ; since the Achæan fleet experienced no difficulty in getting to Ilion, there was no reason why it should experience any in returning. It carefully avoids the reproduction of scenes from the *Iliad* ; where it produces personages of the *Iliad* it does so because the new Poem requires them for its own plot. The Trojan Horse is not an expedient for taking Troy but for giving Menelaos an opportunity of recounting something which will assist the education of Telemachos.

In the third place, whereas historical personages usually get their names before it is known what their function, if any, is to be, the character of fiction, who only comes into existence after his function in a story has been determined, can be named either directly after his function, or at least in a manner that is appropriate to it. Where every character is named on the former principle, fiction turns into allegory ; from which it should really be distinguished, for the former ought not to require interpretation, but only application. In an allegory any improbability may be introduced, whence dumb animals or even trees may be made to talk and think in such compositions ; in fiction the causation should be normal and natural. Most writers of fiction therefore resort to functional names only occasionally or for minor characters ; so a Mr. Luker (*Lucre*) does for a money-lender, a Lord Verisoft or Mutanhed for a titled simpleton. In the *Iliad* we shall notice a remarkable case of a functional name in that of Hektor, which is of itself sufficient to demonstrate that we have here to do with fiction pure and simple ; but it is chiefly in the nomenclature of minor personages that the Poet

resorts to the functional name either undisguised or but slightly veiled. Some of these cases are so familiar that they need not be specified. Of Helenos "Mind-catcher" the derivation is (as in the case of Hektor) given; he "understood in his mind the counsel which pleased the gods" (*Iliad* vii. 45).<sup>1</sup> Aeschylus should have seen from this that Helene does not mean "Ship-catcher," but "Mind-catcher," where the phrase has a different sense from that which it bears in the case of her brother-in-law; it, like Andromache (men's fight), Hecabe (hundred-ox), and Briseis (explained in *Od.* vi. 159 of her who falls to the highest bidder) might be the name of any noble woman. In such cases the line between the functional name and the merely appropriate name is not easily drawn.

A few of these names attracted the attention of Plato in the *Cratylus*; in the case of foreign names the Poet seems occasionally to have taken a little trouble to secure some local colouring; his Phoenician Arybas is probably for Hasdrubal, somewhat as Hannibal becomes Annibas; his Egyptian Proteus is probably the Coptic word for "king," and the Egyptian king Thon has a flavour of his country, though his consort has a Greek name. Doubtless he did wisely in avoiding foreign names so far as possible. The translator of the *Wisdom of Solomon* at a much later period decided that barbarous names would not do in Greek, and so he has left a series of enigmas.

Where a work is fiction, easy rather than likely names may be used, for no one is (or at least ought to be) deceived. But any one who writing history substituted

<sup>1</sup> Compare *δορυξός* for *δορυξόος*.

euphonious for real names would be inexcusable ; since he would be intentionally deceiving. When Josephus informs us that David had a wife named Aegisthe, and that a sage of the East who was Solomon's contemporary was called Chalkeus, he comes near incurring this censure ; for the former implies that David married a Hellenic princess and the latter implies that Eastern sages of this period had Hellenic names. If Homer in order to avoid an uncouth name had substituted a Hellenic appellation in the case of the Trojan leader in a historic war, his conduct would be reprehensible. For there would be a possibility if not a probability that other records of this war would be preserved, and serious confusion would result. But where we have not a chronicle of actual events, but the solution of an intellectual problem, no mischief arises from bestowing Hellenic names on Trojan heroes. Attention to detail is desirable, but not at the expense which would be involved in disfiguring the page with outlandish names. Hektor belonged to a period when a hero could toss with the utmost ease a stone such as two of the strongest men of our day could scarcely move at all (xii. 451) ; since there never was such a period, it is a matter of very little importance to what language the name of such a hero belonged. In our time some translators of fiction alter the names so as to suit the language of the translation ; but no tolerable translator of history ever does this. The historian's purpose is not to entertain but to instruct ; and learning is, as Aristotle says, accompanied with pain, or at least effort.

In the case of historic personages the name is of little consequence. That a military commander should have



such a name as Buller, which means "a loud gurgling noise," or Kitchener, which means "a cook" or "a kitchen range," surprises no one; for we are all aware that the name has nothing to do with the career which its owner may follow. In that of fictitious personages it is the most solid thing about them; it is the band which keeps the group of qualities together. And one who starts on the futile proceeding of discovering more about the fictitious person than the romancer has chosen to record has ordinarily to resort to the name for want of any other source of information. If no one had ever heard of Admetos and his wife Alkestis except from the casual mention of their existence in the Catalogue, he would be driven to make what he could out of their names; and, it must be admitted, quite a thrilling story can be made out. It has however precisely the same value as the sun-myth into which some one dissolved Wilhelm Müller and Monier Williams, or perhaps the sun-myth generally.

One difference (the fourth) between history and fiction to which attention does not appear to be called in the Poetics is that history can be learned from any number of independent witnesses, whereas fiction is only to be known from its inventor. If Edwin Drood had ever existed, the keen research which has been bestowed on the unfinished novel of Dickens would have led to some result; it would have been known from some source or other whether he reappeared or, if he proved to have been murdered, whether his murderer had ever been discovered. Since he had no existence except in the novelist's imagination, the person who would discover how the work was intended to be finished has to act like



a Cyclic Poet : piece together such hints as he can find scattered throughout the finished portion of the book, and draw some inference from them. Though Dickens is separated from us by but a few decades of years, there is already a tendency to treat his characters as historical ; the houses inhabited by some of them are shown, and there are persons very nearly prepared to produce the birth certificates of others. Probably if there were any demand for the tombs of any of them, these could be shown also. Nevertheless this test would not thereby be shown to be inadequate ; and just as the question of the historical existence of Adam and Eve is not affected by the fact that the tomb of the one is known to be at Jeddah and the other in Ceylon, so the fact that Pausanias could point out one or more tombs of several of the Homeric characters does not really turn them from fictitious into historical personages. That could only be effected by some evidence (epigraphic or other) showing that the existence of these persons—who even according to Homer lived in a pre-historic age—was known to persons who lived before his poems were published. The evidence before us points in the opposite direction. The Hellenic cities went to Homer to discover their ancestry ; there is little reason for thinking that he got it from any other source than his imagination. The expedients invented for his works brought those persons into existence ; but since in such a case we cannot as in that of a statue or a picture discover by experiment whether we have to do with a reality or a simulation, his skill in the latter process has made their existence curiously enduring.

It is of course the case that much actual history is

known to us from one source only ; and the question whether in such cases we have to do with history or fiction has to be decided by various considerations. Much depends on the narrative coming at some point or points in contact with what is otherwise recorded ; thus the Moabite Stone and the Cuneiform inscriptions confirm the historicity of larger portions of the Old Testament than those which are concerned with the same events. The aspect of the matter which most concerns us here is that what independent witnesses attest must be historical, whereas what is attested by a single witness need not be. Supposing we had in the Book of Genesis two independent records of Joseph which differed in certain details : it would be difficult to avoid the inference that Joseph was a historical personage, since two romancers would not compose the same romance. If the two narratives had developed out of an earlier romance, they would not be independent. In the Biblical narrative Joseph, whether historical or not, is an expedient for bringing the Israelites into Egypt ; their settling in that country, also whether historical or not, is due to this personage. If he was historical, there is nothing surprising in differences of detail about him ; Timurlenk is historical and one of his biographies is a panegyric and the other a lampoon. But if he be a fiction excogitated in order to explain how the Israelites came to migrate, two persons would not independently devise the same plan and employ the same name ; they might just as well dream the same dream.

When Aristotle asserts that fiction is more scientific than history his meaning is made clear by the considera-

tions which have been enumerated. Just as the laws of motion have to be abstracted, since in matter all sorts of factors affect them : just as economical theories rarely enable sound forecasts to be made, because they deal in the abstract with operations of which each is profoundly affected by influences which this science cannot measure : so for the study of the working of such groups of qualities as constitute characters, we have to assume situations wherein those groups are by themselves.

The theory then that the qualities are created for the sake of the expedients, and not *vice versa*, is a true account of the genesis of the Homeric Poems, and so of the fiction which has commanded more attention and been found more entertaining and instructive than any other. The process indeed assumes knowledge on the reader's part of the principles whereon men act : of the motives which determine their conduct, and of the general grouping of qualities in human beings. And, as Aristotle observes, the pleasure afforded by the works consists largely in *recognition*. The fictitious procedure is in accordance with what the reader knows from his own experience to be real procedure. And indeed when a writer of fiction makes his characters act in a way wherein men do not act, the reader is apt to fling the book down in disgust.

One objection which naturally suggests itself is drawn from the supernatural machinery. In modern fiction the supernatural is rarely introduced. In the Iliad and Odyssey it seems to abound. The gods seem to be constantly taking part in the action. Even in the Games they help and hinder the sportsmen. The

action of the *Iliad* starts with the influence which a goddess brings to bear on the chief God, who sends a dream which sets the vehicle in motion.

The supernatural in Homer may be divided into three sorts, of which only one is liable to the objection raised.

1. Much of the causation which a later age regards as supernatural is with an earlier age natural.

That a plague should be caused by the seizure of a priest's daughter would seem ridiculous to a community familiar with microbes and similar discoveries of science ; but for many centuries after the time of Homer the wrath of a god would have seemed the natural and certain explanation of such a calamity. When the earthquake of Lisbon took place, it was followed by a holocaust of persons whose conduct was supposed to have offended the Deity and thus caused it. After the recent earthquake of Messina an English paper suggested that it had been brought on by the profanity of anti-clerical journals. It is to the credit of Homer that what his god wants is not a human sacrifice but the release of a captive ; and his theology is no worse than that of others when he makes the god slay not the culprit, but the innocent crowd.

Similarly in supposing dreams to be divinely inspired he is in agreement with the general opinion of antiquity, and of some in our day. Agamemnon in giving a dream as the reason for what he is about to do is acting as any commander of the time might have done ; the Mahdi of the Sudan did the same not many years ago.

In all such cases as these the activities of the gods are natural rather than supernatural, because they form part of what the reader recognizes as normal procedure.

As Robertson Smith says, the gods share the life of men ; their action can be foreseen, it is supposed, just as that of men can be foreseen : if the taxes are unpaid, the king's agents will distrain for them ; if the gods' dues are withheld, they will take analogous action. Yet it would seem that as soon as men could observe and think, there were some who had some doubts as to the existence or at any rate as to the operations of these gods. They so frequently failed to do what might reasonably have been expected of them. The Homeric Laertes might have been expected to harbour no doubts on the subject ; most of his friends had gods for their parents or grandparents. Yet even he has not the faith which would have removed a molehill. When the Suitors have been dispatched, he finds good grounds for believing in the gods' existence.<sup>1</sup> Aeschylus transfers these words to the mouth of Aegisthos<sup>2</sup> ; yet, if the Odyssey is to be believed, Aegisthos ought not to have doubted the existence of the gods, having himself received a visit from Hermes. And this brings us to the second class of matters wherein the Homeric gods figure. Magnificent as is the thought of the gods sending Hermes to warn Aegisthos of the consequences which the course contemplated by him will entail, the gods do not really act in that way.

2. In most of the cases wherein the gods are introduced, they effect nothing which would not have taken place without their intervention. Possibly their introduction is in part to be explained by Pindar's doctrine, that it is best to ascribe everything to them ; but just

<sup>1</sup> Od. xxiv. 351.

<sup>2</sup> Agamemnon 1579.



as Ares is said to *enter* Hektor, when what is meant is that the martial spirit in him was aroused, so the gods are ordinarily the thoughts and motives whereby men act. Hence such passages from ancient times have been rightly regarded as *allegory*; the mental processes are personified as divine interlocutors, counsellors, or prompters. Or they are external agents, chances such as befall in real life. Hermes is *an idea that occurs*; Athene is *calculation*, usually sound and wise, sometimes mistaken and wrong, as was the case with Pandaros.

We are not entitled to say that Homer was a monotheist or a deist or theist; since the human mind can harbour contradictions, he may simultaneously have regarded Ares, Athene and the like both as abstractions and as persons, differing only in scale from human beings. It has been well observed that his pantheon is represented simultaneously as an abode of peace and happiness, and as a hotbed of disputes, where even the chief god cannot keep his household in order. Doubtless this latter state corresponds well with the conflicting sentiments in the human mind; the former suits a pantheon better. Perhaps in thinking of the gods as the conflicting sentiments we return to the belief in their activities which was described in the first section.

3. But there remain the cases wherein the intervention of the gods effects something which would not, it seems, have been accomplished by the human agents if left to themselves. The main cases occur, as will be seen in the next chapter, in connexion with Aeneas; he is the only personage in the whole book who is in a sense historical, as his interests are maintained by his descendant, the despot of Ilion; and it is this intro-



duction of the historical into the fictitious which baffles the Poet, and causes him to have recourse to the supernatural. As the foremost hero of his time, he must challenge Achilles ; but he must neither kill Achilles nor be killed by him ; hence he must be withdrawn from the fray by the gods. If he is to win a race through his horses, and that race can only be run by Achaeans, his horses must somehow be seized without his suffering any injury thereby ; again he must be withdrawn by a god—on this occasion only for a time. The rest of the *teratologia* in Book v. is also meant indirectly for the glorification of Aeneas.

The other example in the *Iliad* is the removal of Sarpedon's corpse. The fight for the corpse of Patroklos is of vital importance for the dénouement, as will be seen ; Menelaos is in command at the time, and he is inclined to mild measures (vi. 51). The reason for retaining the corpse of Patroklos is that it may be exchanged for the corpse of Sarpedon. Hektor after slaying Patroklos is anxious to retire for a time upon his laurels. If then the Achaeans are in possession of the corpse of Sarpedon, what more likely than that Menelaos will negotiate an exchange ? Some mode must be found of getting rid of this solid object, and the *deus ex machina* is the easiest. But a special discussion between Zeus and Hera is introduced with the view of justifying this method ; and indeed if Zeus intervenes at all, we should expect something more effective than the rescue of a corpse. As much might have been done for Sarpedon as was twice done for Aeneas.

Here then something is done through divine intervention which would not have been done without it ;

a case of divine intervention which appears to be not only superfluous, but troublesome, is the miraculous provision of fresh armour for Achilleus. If other heroes can use the armour of Achilleus, he ought to be able to use theirs; and even though he did not himself strip fallen foes of their armour (vi. 417), whence he might not have had a supply from this source like Idomeneus (xiii. 265), there were wounded heroes from whom he might borrow. The magnificence of the ornament doubtless justifies its introduction.

It is uncertain whether we should place the similar matter in the *Odyssey* under the first head or under this. Odysseus has been transferred to fairyland, wherewith the land of reality has no communication; yet Telemachos requires some evidence that his father is living before he will accept the claim of a beggar to be Odysseus, and Odysseus must know that his son is alive and safe in Ithaka, or he will not have a sufficient motive to make him reject such opportunites as meet him of founding another home. Hence the Poet resorts in the one case to Egyptian magic, in the other to the services of a witch who can put clients in communication with the dead. Probably the Poet's audience would not have rejected these methods of obtaining the key to mysteries. The relegation of Odysseus for the time being to fairyland renders them indispensable.

That criticism which treats the Homeric gods as purely anthropomorphic is certainly erroneous; the argument, *e.g.*, of Lachmann that because "all the gods accompanied Zeus to the Aethiopians," therefore Thetis must have gone with them, and could not attend to Achilleus at the time; or that Apollo must have been

engaged nine days successively in shooting at the Achaeans, and in consequence could have attended to no other business, might be called childish. The Homeric god is both outside time and space, as an abstraction, and inside it; just as the abode of the gods is at once peaceful and full of discord.

Aristotle seems to think of fiction as a *transition* from good fortune to its contrary, or *vice versa*. In the case of the two Homeric Poems we should probably be more intelligible if we described them as *Problems*, with the solution of which the whole work is occupied. How is a hero's excellence to be demonstrated?—is the problem of the *Iliad*; an expedient is discovered, and 24 books are spent in its elaboration. How is a ruined man to recover his kingdom and his queen in the face of numerous enemies?—is the problem of the *Odyssey*, and there too 24 books are occupied with the answer.

Though Aristotle's rule for the employment of the supernatural is dictated by the needs of the theatre rather than by study of the Homeric Poems, he is quite right in strictly limiting its use. The causation has to be natural, else the reader will not *recognize* the correspondence between the fiction and what happens in actual life. In lieu however of saying that the question to be answered by the novelist is "what words and deeds suit a particular character" it would be better to make it: What character is best suited for the expedient which the solution of the problem requires? The expedients for removing Achilles from the field and bringing him back to it are likely to have been thought out before the character of Achilles had been constructed; the

mixture of heroism, vanity and savagery of which it consists is due to the needs of these expedients.

We have been able to trace to Homer Aristotle's theory of Katharsis, though we are unable on Homer's authority to extend it beyond the *Odyssey*. Whether we believe in the *Black Bile* or not, it is certainly the fact that fiction is vastly easier to read than history, even when it is unaccompanied by the condiments of metre and music. If a book is of thrilling interest, we say that it reads like a romance. It seems that Aristotle's analysis of this phenomenon presents all the truth at which we shall ever arrive. Fiction is interesting because it is purposeful ; it is events worked into a plan. Its world is limited ; so many persons and only so many exist for it, and there is abstraction from all others. The events which it records are all correlated ; if one of the agents does something or says something, it is due to something which precedes and helps to bring about something which follows. Hence we obtain that regularity with limitation which is characteristic of human art. Its theme is ordinarily one and one only : the separation of lovers to be followed by their union. The result then is known to the reader from the start, only he does not know by what steps the union will be brought about. And if the series of events is well conceived, if the expedients are ingenious and the characters are so drawn that they are adequate to the performances which are attributed to them, then the work excites the admiration which ability unfailingly evokes. And there is always the feeling that the whole affair is not serious. That which never happened cannot

really affect the reader's life. Being unreal it can withdraw his attention from the real.

Thus we obtain the double pleasure of recognition and of symmetry. It is due to the importance of the former that novelists rarely succeed if they select an unfamiliar environment. Recognition is only possible when the reader is fairly familiar with the circles wherein the story moves.

That the subject chosen is the fortunes of supermen is recognition of the fact that the great are more interesting than the small, and are the only people who really matter, in the judgment of the bulk of mankind. It is the theory of the game of Chess; the pawns do not matter. And they do not matter, because their loss does not seriously affect any result; whereas the withdrawal of an Achilles means the defeat and ruin of the rest. And Homer is not too inveterate a worshipper of the great to fail to furnish a reason for the reverence wherein they are held. The condition whereon they enjoy their honours is, as Sarpedon observes, that they fight in the first rank (*Iliad* xii. 321). It was their business to spend from youth to old age in hard warfare till they wasted away (xiv. 85). While then the interest in the doings of the great which largely dictates the contents of our newspapers is in part traceable to human vanity, in part it is based on recognition of the importance of these persons to the community.

The causes which emancipated the drama from the Miracle-play are probably numerous; two which suggest themselves are its ceasing to be a religious performance, and the recognition that other persons besides the supermen matter. With the Hellenes the former never



took place ; the acting of tragedies was a form of public worship, ultimately abolished by the Emperor Anastasius in 501 A.D., as we learn from the Syriac chronicler, Joshua the Stylite,<sup>1</sup> who records that an improvement in the harvest was the immediate result. When at the time of the Renaissance the interest in the Greek drama revived, the worship of the old gods had ceased.

\* Besides this change there was that alteration of moral standards, traced with different degrees of masterliness by Draper, Buckle, and Lecky, which rendered it possible for the fate of such persons as Goethe's Gretchen or Dickens's Little Emily to be tragic. To us the lives of those captives whom Achilleus murders to avenge Patroklos matter no less than that of Patroklos ; indeed very much more, since Patroklos is slain in a fair fight. To us the lives of the slave-girls whom Odysseus and Telemachos murder because they took the losing side matter ; but for all that *eudaimonia* seems still the best subject for romance, and that, as Aristotle holds, implies the possession of an ample share of worldly goods.

A man who is quite incapable of inventing a machine may be able to understand how one is constructed ; hence it is no arrogant undertaking, provided we have proper guidance, to endeavour to trace the growth and development of the thoughts which find expression in the Homeric Poems. And such guidance is furnished by Aristotle, because he detected the fundamental differences between these works and those of others who tried to compose epics. An epic is not the biography of a hero or the narration of a War ; such works have to be regulated by dates, and, if they are faithful, embody

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Wright, p. 35.

great quantities of dry detail. Presenting men as they have really lived and acted, they offer a mixture of the interesting with the uninteresting, of the important with the unimportant, and of the sublime with the ridiculous. If a man's life is followed into details, he ceases to be a hero ; if a war be recorded with proper accuracy, the reader's memory must constantly be aided with charts and plans. And though there is much merit in a good and attractive style, it is generally agreed among earnest persons that anything like elaborate ornament is a serious defect in works of the kind. The practice of introducing oratorical exercises in the shape of speeches put into the mouths of those who took part in the events lingered long, but is now universally rejected, as tainting historical truth with fiction.

Most of all it must be emphasized that whereas for a work of fiction Apollo and the Muses are the right sources, for one of science their services are not required. The sources for history are the persons who have witnessed the events, and have been in touch with the chief agents ; some intelligence and some literary skill are doubtless required for the purpose of working their statements into an intelligible and consistent narrative, but the historical student has little fault to find with the method of Tabari, who inserts *in extenso* the narratives which he has received. What the student desires to know is what actually occurred and when ; year, month and day, and in certain cases hour should be specified.

The inquiry into sources is of importance, because we cannot estimate the credibility of the statements unless we know from whom they originated. And this, the trustworthiness of the assertions, is our chief concern,

since human history is a part of what happens in nature, and so is not to be separated by any hard and fast line from natural science.

But in fiction, which is the working out of a problem, both dates and sources are superfluous ; if dates are given, they are necessarily fictitious. And the credibility is not estimated by the trustworthiness of the sources, but by the reader's own intelligence and knowledge. Thus to a community which habitually ascribed plague to the wrath of some god, the opening scene of the *Iliad* would seem credible ; to a community which has abandoned that belief it seems childish.

Hence we come back to the theory of unity, of which we have been examining different aspects. If any one were to take a proposition of Euclid and show that the first half had been composed by one mathematician and the second by another, such a theory would seem untenable ; the utmost that could be maintained would be that one mind had assisted another in working out a problem, but in such case—for which external evidence would be required—the proposition would be the joint work of the authors. Their contributions would be so mixed that they could not be distinguished. Similarly in the case of the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* it is conceivable that the Poet obtained suggestions from other persons for the solution of difficulties : having, *e.g.*, explained the situation after the arrival of Odysseus at his home, he might have invited suggestions for a mode of proving to Penelope that Odysseus, though disguised as a feeble old man, was still in possession of his mature vigour. And some person might suggest to him the incident of Iros. And that some of the machinery in both Poems

is derived from stories wherewith the Poet had somehow become acquainted is exceedingly likely. But such contributions do not interfere with the unity of the work, since they entered into its structure ; they were absorbed into its system before it took shape and entered the world.

The task therefore which lies before us is not the futile one of referring the different parts of an ancient work to lost and unknown sources ; for the source is known, the mind of one man of genius. It is rather an inquiry into the reasons for the parts of a structure : why is this part and that required ? A very similar inquiry in some ways was that which led to the deciphering of the cryptograms : Why in the Prologue of the *Iliad* is every word in the first line liable to objection, and the first word liable to two objections ? The answer was found : because each of those letters had another use, and the prologue was sacrificed to the secret preface. In the Poems the questions which occur are more numerous and the answers more varied : Why in the *Iliad* do we want Diomed, Odysseus, the two Aias, and other characters ? why is the ninth Book required or the tenth ? Possibly the answer will not be discovered ; but the way to discover it is surely to endeavour to start whence the author started, and see what difficulties suggest themselves and what expedients will solve them. We have not to find the expedients, which would be beyond the powers of most of us. We can however recognize the merit of the expedients which the Poet has applied, just as we can admire the mechanism of a watch which we could not have invented ourselves.

## CHAPTER V

### THE PLAN OF THE ILIAD

THE key to the Iliad is given in Plato's description of it as a *Tragedy*<sup>1</sup> which properly means "a dirge over the dead." The nucleus of the work is therefore to be found in the dirges over Hektor which come near the end of the closing book. Let us consider who is the fittest subject for a dirge, who are the best suited to utter it, and what is the most thrilling occasion.

The first question is easily answered from any dirge-literature. The most suitable subject is the hero who dies for his country.<sup>2</sup> The second can also be answered from the same source. The proper persons to chant dirges are *noble women*; the women of Meccah, hearing that a certain man was skilled in musical composition, said to him: *Wouldst thou hear our lamentations over our slain, and take and set them to music?*<sup>3</sup> The men of the tribe have the function of avenging the dead; the women should mourn them.

In answering the third question however the ability of our author is exhibited. The most thrilling occasion is when in consequence of the hero's death the city is about to be stormed, but has not yet been stormed.<sup>4</sup> If it has already been stormed, then the noble women will have to mourn at the conqueror's dictation; be-

<sup>1</sup> Theaetetus 152 e; Republic 598 d.

<sup>2</sup> This is specially emphasized in Od. viii. 523-530.

<sup>3</sup> Aghani ii. 127, ed. 1.

<sup>4</sup> This too is made clear in l. c. Od.



wailing their own kinsmen under the pretext of bewailing Patroklos, as the Poet points out, in what is likely to have been the first line composed.<sup>1</sup> If the hero dies in triumph, then the dirges will be drowned by the songs of triumph. "No words can describe the mingled feelings of joy and grief, of exultation and melancholy, which pervaded the British empire upon the news being received of the battle of Trafalgar. In a single moment from the result of one engagement they had passed from a state of anxious solicitude to one of independence and security. Inestimable as these blessings were, they yet seemed an inadequate compensation for the life of the hero by whom they had been gained."<sup>2</sup> Hence a dirge on Nelson would have been only in part a mournful performance. The feelings of the audience would have been mixed. When the news of the battle and conquest of Quebec reached England, the previous gloom served only to heighten the exultation and the glory—blended however with deep sympathy and sorrow for the fall of Wolfe.<sup>3</sup>

Out of these considerations, and before the other figures take shape, one personage arises, *the Sustainer of the city*, whose death renders the fall of the city certain. It is remarkable that in this case the functional name, Hektor, "Sustainer," is retained without alteration. The Poet even tells us its etymology.<sup>4</sup> Yet by doing so he reveals the truth that his whole narrative is fiction. For in the first place the name of a pre-historic Trojan

<sup>1</sup> Iliad xix. 302.

<sup>2</sup> Alison's *History of Europe*, vi. 58 (1854).

<sup>3</sup> Mahon's *History of England*, iv. 249.

<sup>4</sup> xxiv. 730 ἔχες δ' ἀλόχους κεδνὰς καὶ νήπια τέκνα.

would not have been Greek ; this may be taken as admitted in what is told us of the Trojan language in Book iv. 237. In the second place men are not named from the functions which they are only known after their deaths to have discharged. Plato's theory that it is " a royal name " <sup>1</sup> and the equivalent of " king " would get over the second difficulty, if it were not so repeatedly pointed out that the safety of Troy depended on Hektor, whence the fall of Hektor was equivalent to the fall of Troy. The name then of this personage arises from the situation, and it is a situation as seen by those who come after the event, not those who were present thereat. For—as innumerable examples show—the besieged hold out long after their chance of maintaining themselves ultimately is lost. When some supplementary information about the siege of Troy is given in the Odyssey, it turns out that even after the death of Hektor a good fight was made.

No sooner however has Hektor emerged than he gives rise to another personage. " When the strong man fully armed guardeth his own court, his goods are in peace ; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, he taketh from him his whole armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." The fact that the Hektor has been defeated and slain, which the situation furnishes, implies the arrival of " a stronger than he." Hence the idea occurs to make that stronger personage the hero of the poem, in whose valour that of the Hektor can be reflected. The mightier Achilles is made, if *he* only can defeat Hektor, the more glorious Hektor becomes. Moreover the deficiency which his defeat

<sup>1</sup> Cratylus 393 a.

involves can be compensated in domestic virtues which the other may lack.

Achilleus then is the champion in an assault on Troy in the prehistoric past. And his greatness has to be demonstrated. The mode selected (and it is the only mode possible) is what Mill called "the Method of Difference." Let Achilleus be one among many heroes, and succeed where they all fail. Thus his greatness will be demonstrated.

The mode wherein this is elaborated is as follows. Let Achilleus be withdrawn from the expedition, which then is all but annihilated. Let him return to it, and his return be followed by success. It will be evident that its success is due to him and him only. The experiments which constitute the Method of Difference will have been carried out.

Hence we obtain the true beginning of the narrative. The War is not a historical war, except to the extent that at some time before "the children of Aeneas" arrived, Troy must have been burned by an invader. It is an expedient for a dirge. It is an expedition from which Achilleus was withdrawn and to which he afterwards returned. Expedients have then to be found for withdrawing him and bringing him back.

The expedient for withdrawing him brings the whole work—and most properly—within the framework of the romance, which begins with the parting and ends with the reunion of lovers. This provides a motive for the withdrawal of Achilleus. His beloved is torn from him, and that very act leads by natural causation to her restoration, which furnishes the beauty called by Aristotle *περιπέτεια* "the transformation of an experience

into its contrary by natural causation." But this expedient produces a number of consequences.

In the first place if the beloved of Achilleus is torn from him, and this causes him to abandon the expedition, he cannot be its head ; he must be a subordinate. Hence the leader of the expedition, Agamemnon, comes to the surface, whose name probably means " Very enterprising." Further, since princes do not lead about with them on their expeditions their wives or sweethearts, the beloved must be a captive concubine. Thus when in the Aias of Sophocles the Homeric scene between Hektor and Andromache is transferred to Aias, the part of Andromache has to be given to a slave concubine. The wife of Aias would have been at home in Salamis. Homer endeavours to ennoble this relationship as well as he can. Achilleus asserts that he loved Briseis just as other men of honour love their wives,<sup>1</sup> and Briseis is convinced that her marriage was to have been legitimated on the return from the expedition, if only Patroklos had survived.<sup>2</sup> An opportunity is furnished for a glimpse into the nuptial chamber of Achilleus quite at the end of the poem,<sup>3</sup> which is like the wedding on the last page of a novel.

But if Briseis is a prize of war, and is seized by the leader of the expedition after she has been assigned to Achilleus, the War itself cannot have started where the Poem starts. And since a further expedient has to be found to provide an occasion for the seizure of Briseis, the War may well be put back to a long distance. The time might well have been occupied with the storming

<sup>1</sup> ix. 342.

<sup>2</sup> xix. 302.

<sup>3</sup> xxiv. 676.

of other parts of the Trojan empire before the metropolis itself was attacked. For the reader however it commences with the seizure of Briseis, or the events which immediately occasion it ; whence the author may, when he thinks fit, speak as if that were the real commencement.

Since Achilleus withdraws owing to his being outraged by Agamemnon, the latter must make an attempt to take Troy by himself. But indeed the withdrawal of Achilleus is sufficient to encourage the Trojans to a sortie, so that Agamemnon must fight them in any case (ix. 352 ; v. 789.) What is required is to bring Agamemnon to a point at which he can offer to return Briseis as the price of Achilleus's returning to the field, and to find an expedient for forcing Achilleus back to it.

If Agamemnon succeeds in his attempt on Troy, the story will be spoiled. But if he be utterly defeated, it will be spoiled also ; he will not be able to restore Briseis or otherwise offer conditions. Hence the attempt on Troy must leave him defeated, but still with the possibility of taking home his forces left to him. The expedient which suggests itself is the Wall. The attempt on Troy ends in a drawn battle, and this enables him to build it ; had he won the battle, he would not have needed the Wall ; had he been defeated, he would not have been allowed to build it. By the end of Book vii. then he is in about the same position as the Trojans : he has a Wall to defend, but one which also ensures him from immediate destruction. In Book viii. he tries a sortie, which fails ; he has then to consider seriously the wisdom of abandoning the expedition, which now has little if any chance of success. Nestor is now invented, as the



person who has the qualities necessary for one who will advise Agamemnon to humiliate himself before Achilles.

But the expedient for removing Achilles involves a difficulty. He, as the greatest warrior, is naturally the most popular ; and it is he by whose energy the plague has been stayed, which the action of the chief commander has brought on. When in return for this service the chief commander proceeds to outrage him, what chance will there be that the troops will support the chief commander when he wishes to make an attack on Troy ? There will be no chance ; their temper is tested and found to be exceedingly bad ; even after Agamemnon has humiliated himself, he supposes that it is affection for Achilles which destroys the morale of the troops. Some expedient must then be found for restoring, if not the popularity of Agamemnon, at least the animosity against the Trojans. For this purpose Menelaos is invented ; he probably derives his name from his function : “ Remain, people ! ” He, the brother of the chief commander, challenges a Trojan to settle the matter by single combat ; and in order to make this plausible it is shown that the cause of the whole war was the seizure of this person’s wife by a Trojan prince. These then, as the persons most involved, may well settle the whole business by a duel. The only weak point is that we might have expected them to try that course some nine years before. Only, as has been seen, the War really commences with the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon.

Everything is arranged, and then a Trojan violates the treaty by shooting at Menelaos when he is fighting Paris. This outrage serves the purpose which is being compassed ; the Achaeans are exasperated against the

Trojans ; there is sympathy for Menelaos who has been thus treacherously wounded, and some of it accrues to his brother. The struggle for Troy can now begin.

When in Book ix. Achilleus refuses the offers of Agamemnon, an expedient must be found to make Agamemnon continue the war ; for he would certainly not have been persuaded to humiliate himself to that extent, unless he had been convinced that his other alternatives were ruin and retreat. It is necessary at the time of Book ix. that the last alternative should still be open ; he must have that which he can offer Achilleus, who however is not prepared to bargain, since he wishes his enemy to supplicate. The expedient for renewing the attempt by the sortie of Book xi. is Diomed. He, when Agamemnon is planning retreat, offers to take Troy with no other assistance than that of his friend Sthenelos ; and in Bk. x. is given an opportunity of making good his boast. He scores a very considerable success in his nightly raid, brings back valuable information about the positions of the enemy, and, what is most important, can speak from experience of the worthlessness and untrustworthiness of the Asiatic troops. Since then Diomed would take Troy if Agamemnon retreated, Agamemnon thinks it worth while to try taking it himself.

This sortie fails and now the Trojans mean to cut off the retreat of the Achaeans. Nestor has to devise a fresh plan, and it is one of those wise expedients which succeed in either case. Let Patroklos play the part of a sham Achilleus. Let him get permission to don the armour of Achilleus, and, since the Trojans' success is due to the withdrawal of Achilleus, they may

retire again when they suppose that he has come back. The suggestion is flattering to both Patroklos and Achilleus. To the latter, inasmuch it implies that a sham Achilleus can do more than any other hero in his own person; to Patroklos also, because it gives him the opportunity of outdoing all the heroes except one. Supposing it succeeds, then that is what is wanted; the Achaean camp and vessels will be saved, and the situation will be restored. Supposing it fails and Patroklos is killed, then Achilleus will be forced back to the field.

The expedient whereby Patroklos is brought under the influence of Nestor is the following: Achilleus, having advised the abandonment of the expedition, when he finds that there is a fresh sortie, is naturally anxious to know how it will turn out. For if it succeeds, it will have been demonstrated that he was not, as he supposed, indispensable. Since his ships are outside the Wall, he will be in a favourable position for watching the issue. If Patroklos is to be persuaded by Nestor to act as a sham Achilleus, he must be sent by the last to ascertain something which it is important for Achilleus to know; and if the question be about the personality of some hero who leaves the field, the difficulty arises that Achilleus will be too well acquainted with the heroes of the first rank not to recognize them, whereas it will not be worth the while of Nestor to convoy those of lower rank in his chariot from the field. The problem is solved by finding some one whose value lies not in his prowess as a warrior, but in his importance in some other way to the community: a medical man "is worth many others" (xi. 515).

whence the services of Nestor may be demanded for his rescue, though he would not be in the circle of such as Achilleus. Hence Achilleus, knowing that Nestor would only convoy a person of great importance, is likely to be uncertain whether he is convoying Machaon or some hero who is of more importance as a fighting man ; and since the removal from the field of each hero makes the ultimate gratification of his vanity more probable, he has to ascertain who it is, and therefore sends Patroklos on this errand.

This expedient is defended in xxiii. 457-498 where there is a dispute between Idomeneus and the Lokrian Aias about the identity of one who is driving a chariot in the race. The former rightly supposes him to be Diomed, whereas the latter is convinced that he is Eumelos. Achilleus tells them not to quarrel on the subject, but wait till they can ascertain who the person is. This is a characteristic example of a Homeric argument, because under the appearance of a perfectly natural scene it replies to those who might question the adequacy of the expedient for bringing Patroklos under the influence of Nestor. It is shown that when a chariot hurries past, the identity of the charioteer may be mistaken even by those who know him well ; and it is shown that in such a case Achilleus would not be satisfied with a conjecture, but desire to ascertain the fact. The Lokrian Aias, who is so positive on the wrong side, is no mean judge of identity ; for in xiii. 45-72, when Posidon masquerades as Kalchas, this Aias is able to detect the deception. The scene in xiii. is then preparation for that in xxiii., which is itself justification of the expedient adopted in xi.

When Patroklos has been brought under the spell of Nestor, much ingenuity is employed in getting the necessary time for the operations which will result in the intervention of Patroklos at the critical moment, just when by the burning of the ships the retreat is about to be cut off. The method devised is to make the Trojan attack succeed at first, so that Patroklos is persuaded of the need for Nestor's expedient; it then is temporarily arrested, so that Patroklos has time to go back to Achilleus, persuade him, and don his armour. It then succeeds again, and Patroklos arrives at the critical moment.

Since the motive in Patroklos and in Achilleus where<sup>n</sup> on Nestor has been able to work is vanity, Patroklos is most unlikely to observe the instructions of Achilleus to satisfy himself with repelling the Trojan assault on the Achaean camp, and refrain from taking the offensive. He takes it, advances to the wall of Troy and is there killed. Once the Trojans are back at their Wall, though they have slain the general in command of the Achaeans, it is likely that they will take refuge once more in their city; so that after all these struggles we shall have returned to the opening situation. This is really likely, for their attempt on the Wall has failed, and their losses have been exceedingly serious. Great trouble is therefore taken to provide an adequate expedient for bringing them back to the Wall of the Achaean camp. The persons invented for the purpose are Sarpedon and Glaukos. Sarpedon is killed and the Achaeans are supposed to be in possession of his body; Glaukos insists that the body of Patroklos must be secured in order to be given in exchange for the other;



and he threatens to withdraw his Lykian troops unless there is compliance with this demand. The Achaeans fight fiercely for the body of Patroklos, which they ultimately bring home; but in the course of the struggle the Trojans are once more brought up to the Achaean Wall, where Achilles again makes his appearance. Once brought back thither Hektor is not the man to contemplate a retreat to Troy.

Here then we find the function of Sarpedon in the story, the point at which his intervention is necessary to prevent it from breaking down. For all we know it may be a Lykian name, and there may have been a cult of Sarpedon; or the whole may be the Poet's invention. The careers and positions of Sarpedon and Glaukos are dictated by the needs of this expedient; for Glaukos must be of sufficient importance to force the hand of Hektor, and Sarpedon's services must be sufficient to justify the demands of Glaukos. The miraculous removal of Sarpedon's corpse is introduced to avoid the possibility of the Achaeans suggesting what Glaukos suggests—viz., an exchange of it for that of Patroklos.

Aristotle holds that the hero of Tragedy should commit some offence to which a man of his rank is liable, but which is not sufficiently heinous to cause him to forfeit the reader's sympathy. This perhaps is suggested by the peccadillo of Hektor, which consists in his stripping Patroklos of his armour and wearing it himself; lest the reader should be unaware that this is an offence, Andromache at another point in the work is made to recall<sup>1</sup> how Achilles refrained from commit-

ting it. What suggests to Hektor to put on the Arms of Achilleus is probably that Glaukos himself is wearing the armour of an enemy ; for the scene wherein Glaukos interchanges with Diomed is when Hektor has for the time left the field. If the Poet's memory was properly working when he composed viii. 194, the cuirass of Diomed was known to Hektor by reputation, though in value it was by no means equal to that of Glaukos.

In the Odyssey there is reason for thinking that folklore—*i.e.* tales involving the same incidents, but accommodated to different agents—is occasionally employed. The story of Bellerophon is the place in the Iliad where the indications of this are clearest. The woman who, when unable to secure a lover, slanders him appears in many tales ; and the missive containing instructions for the ruin of its bearer, which somehow fails in its purpose, crops up in stories of many lands. It assumes acquaintance with the art of writing ; and of Homer's acquaintance with that art *we* have no doubt. Hence the omission of allusions to it are intentional ; it was better to suppose it unknown in the Heroic Age, and the isolated reference in the story of Bellerophon is a case of Homer nodding. No advantage is gained by supposing the writing in that particular note to have been of an elementary type ; indeed in order to crowd *many* *slanders* into a tablet the art must have been fully developed. The line wherein there is this mention of writing might well be used for testing Aristotle's theory that the omission of *anything* would cause the whole work to collapse. For evidently without that line we should not know

what were meant by *ghastly tokens* ; the phrase is unintelligible without the comment in the following verse. The purpose of the story of which it thus forms a necessary part is to show how Diomed and Glaucos came to be friends ; this fiction is necessary to give a reason for their exchange of armour ; and this is required in order to give Hektor a reason for changing his. This last furnishes justification for Hektor's fall. Hence without this line about writing the story would be seriously impaired.

It will be seen that when Achilles remains in spite of his having announced his intention of sailing away he does so because he cannot do otherwise ; but why does he not carry out his other intention of waiting till the rest are destroyed and it comes to his turn to be attacked ? The story of Meleager, told by Phoenix, explains this : the restoration of Briseis would not in such a case take place, and so the whole story would be spoiled. When therefore Phoenix remains with Achilles, though the other two delegates return (ix. 662), this is not for nothing ; for it is the advice of Phoenix which Achilles eventually follows with the hope of getting Briseis restored (xvi. 85). Phoenix is to Achilles what Nestor is to Agamemnon ; a man who can without offence give distasteful advice. We are not indeed told that Phoenix repeated it ; but he remains with Achilles, and whatever may have been the time between Books ix. and xvi. he at least has the opportunity of doing so. And the brilliancy of Nestor's plan lies partly in this that it enables Achilles at once to give way and not to give way ; " it will be quite unnecessary for you to take the field yourself ; an

ordinary fighter, pretending to be you, will be able to do more than Diomed, who boasted that he would take Troy, and Agamemnon who had been convinced that he was about to do the same on the authority of one of those dreams which you yourself acknowledge come from Zeus" (i. 64). The inconvenience, which is known to Nestor, and probably to Phoenix, but escapes Achilles, is that Patroklos has ambitions of his own and is not satisfied with the part of a sham Achilles.

The last act commences when Achilles has been forced back to the field and a reason has been found for making Hektor await his onset. Some thought has been devoted to finding a suitable person to bring the news of the death of Patroklos to Achilles; and this gives rise to the creation of Antilochos. What is required is a dare-devil: for such an errand was exceedingly dangerous; a messenger of ill news to such a person as Achilles was quite likely to meet his death. On the other hand some one is required who can be spared from the battlefield at a critical time; he must not therefore be a hero of the first rank. Care therefore is taken to give Antilochos occasion to display his powers. He strikes the first blow when the fighting begins; and he is brought under the notice of Menelaos, who after the death of Patroklos takes the command. But he also runs away from Hektor (xv. 581).

The promise to restore Briseis was made in Book ix., and steps, which need not be further described, have been taken to make it possible to restore her *intactam*. Before the remarriage can take place something must come about to change the mood of Achilles, whom

rivers of blood are not sufficient to appease. And the expedient found for this purpose is the easy and natural one of Funeral Games, which can compass this change. They are besides necessary for the purpose of permitting Achilles to restore the body of Hektor, which then can be made the object of the dirges whence the whole Poem starts. The Book of Games is not therefore a mere ornament, such as the Latin poetasters imagined, but an element in the plot without which it would come to grief; for without this expedient the dirges, *i.e.* that part of the work whither all the rest leads, and for which it is a sort of sounding-board, would be disconnected with the rest.

The Book of Games is however utilized for another purpose of primary importance. Hektor, after all, is a fiction; the person who matters is Aeneas. It has been seen that he cannot defeat Achilles without bringing the whole story to grief; for if Achilles were killed, the dynasty of Priam would remain (xx. 182). He cannot be slain by Achilles, as he would in that case not become the founder of the dynasty which took the place of Priam's. Hence the gods are called in for this *dignus vindice nodus*; his tremendous valour causes him to challenge Achilles, and the gods withdraw him by mutual consent, because it is their purpose that his family shall inherit the kingdom. Very likely had he been so minded he would have been able to overcome Achilles; the treatment however which he had received from Priam had roused in him just indignation (xiii. 460), so most likely he was half-hearted. Still, if Aeneas cannot win the War *ex hypothesi*, let him do the next best thing: let him win a Horse-race!



To win the Olympic contest was according to Cicero with the Greeks almost greater than to triumph in Rome<sup>1</sup>; and Mommsen, with whom Cicero's opinion is not likely to have counted for much, supposes this notion to have become antiquated only in the fifth or fourth century B.C.<sup>2</sup> That Cicero's language is not exaggerated for the earlier period is proved by that which is repeatedly employed by Pindar.

Now the peculiarity of the horse-race is this: whereas in other contests the glory accrues to the person who does something, in this it accrues to the person who *owns* something, viz., the horse. Hence when in Lord Beaconsfield's *Life of George Bentinck* we read of the enthusiasm of the latter nobleman for "The Blue Ribbon of the Turf," nothing is to be inferred about his horsemanship: we can only infer something about his possessions. The glory would accrue to him, but the work was to be done by the horse and the jockey. And it is this noteworthy peculiarity, which the Greek horse (or chariot) race shared with its modern representative, that enables the Poet to present Aeneas with this Blue Ribbon. Aeneas cannot himself take part in the Achæan sports; but his horses can. An expedient has then to be found for getting the horses into hands which can employ them for this important purpose.

To effect this without detracting from the glory of Aeneas is the purpose of the *teratologia* of Book v. Diomed is chosen, he having been created for another purpose which requires a specially valiant hero. He is indeed wounded; but Athene bestows special power

<sup>1</sup> Pro Flacco § 31.

<sup>2</sup> *Geschichte* v. 264. 1885.

upon him, and he not only wounds Aeneas, but even draws blood (or rather ichor) from the goddess Aphrodite, who is getting her son away. Phoebus does this instead, and presently Athene takes her place beside Diomed in his chariot, and the latter wounds the War-god himself ! Evidently then not the slightest blame attaches to Aeneas for losing his horses on this occasion : he only yields them to a man who can drive the War-god himself off the field !

It is not desirable that these horses should have too easy a victory. Hence expedients are found for providing them with suitable rivals. Nestor is given the opportunity of driving them (viii. 116), and his son Antilochos is afterwards to race them hard, after receiving instructions from his father, whose skill in horses is only equalled by Menestheus (ii. 555). Nestor would have liked to persuade Diomed that those which had belonged to Rhesos were superior (x. 550), only Odysseus refutes his assertion.

The horsemanship of Nestor, like his age, wisdom, and exploits, is not therefore either historical or legendary ; the group of qualities which make up Nestor accumulate in accordance with the purposes which he is made to serve.

And, as has been seen, the *deus ex machina* is introduced in the work mainly for the benefit of Aeneas. In Book xx. the gods rescue him for good ; in Book v. they see that Diomed secures his horses, but that he escapes, to re-enter the field almost immediately. When a decent interval has elapsed after the incidents in Book v. they are told to quit the field altogether ; Zeus (viii. 10) gives the most emphatic orders on this

subject. When their services again become indispensable, owing to the fight between Aeneas and Achilleus, these orders are revoked, and the gods are told they may assist either side (xx. 24). They are however an unruly family, and in Book xiv. a means of beguiling Zeus is employed which has justly been censured by the religious. Since there is a somewhat analogous episode in the *Odyssey*, it is reasonable to suppose that when the works were composed there was already a poetic convention which required something of the sort to be introduced. Only in Book xiv. the gods do not really accomplish anything which would not have taken place without them; they are as ornamental as is the dream sent by Zeus to Agamemnon to induce him to attempt a storm. In the case of Aeneas they really affect the situation.

Hence of the 24 Books of which the author tells us the *Iliad* originally consisted there is not one which does not spring from the original idea, or fails to contain expedients which link the several parts of the action together.

The number of heroes of the first rank is dictated by certain needs; it is desirable that most of those who take part in the Games should be old friends, and these require numerous names. Further for removing the body of Patroklos four persons are wanted: two to carry the corpse, and two to repel the enemy. In order to make the Trojan success of Book xii. intelligible several of the chief heroes must have sustained wounds; four, Agamemnon, Odysseus, Eurypylos, and Diomed are thought sufficient. It is possible that a certain amount of prolixity in the descriptions of the fighting

is due to the size of the undertaking: twenty-four Books were ordered, and the Poet had perhaps at times to strain his fancy in order to fill them. Hence there are portions which read somewhat like the *Times* casualty lists in the Great War. This doubtless aids the illusion; even one who is convinced that he has before him a work of the imagination finds these casualty lists too plausible for him, till he asks himself whether the casualty lists of a pre-historic war could possibly be preserved: whether a struggle wherein one side is commanded by so obvious a fiction as Hektor could possibly display reality in the case of minor characters.

The hero whose function is hardest to find appears to be Idomeneus. His younger comrade Meriones is required for the rescue of the corpse of Patroklos; he has to perform exploits in the earlier part of the narrative which qualify him for this important undertaking. What we notice is that before Meriones fulfils his function, care is taken to send a chariot away with Idomeneus in it (xvii. 622). And this clue, when followed, reveals his purpose. Wounded men are carried away from the field in chariots (xi. 597 and xiii. 539). If the corpse of Patroklos were carried away in this style when rescued, the Trojans would not be drawn back to the Achaean Wall; for they would be unable to overtake the horses. Hence *all the Achacan chariots have to be removed* from the field. This happens xii. 119, where the Achaeans enter their Wall on the left with horses and chariots. They will be unable to bring their chariots out elsewhere, because horses cannot be driven across the Trench (xii. 63). Hence

by the advice of Polydamas (*ibid.*) the Trojans dismount and leave their horses with attendants before they cross the Trench. The only exception is Asios, who makes for the passage through which the Achaeans had been removing their chariots. This chariot comes into the possession of Idomeneus in xiii. 400, when he kills Asios, and Antilochos seizes the vehicle with the horses. Since Meriones and Idomeneus clearly went into the field on foot (xiii. 295), this is the only Achaean chariot still in the field in xvii. 622, since that of Patroklos has been rescued and driven off by Automedon. For when the Achaeans rally under Patroklos, they come out at the other end of the Wall, where the burning of the ships has commenced.

Idomeneus derives his qualities from this situation. As a man past the prime of life, he may without incurring reproach leave the battle-field unwounded; and the effect of his age is that, though he can hold his own in battle, he is unable to run (xiii. 515). He must not be wounded, for in that case he would be unable to drive; and his friend Meriones would have to look after him at the very time he is needed for the rescue of the corpse. In his case then as in so many others the qualities of the agent are determined by the function which he is invented to fulfil.

It may be thought that the difficulty wherewith we have been dealing is a small one for so considerable an expedient. For it would seem that the purpose of Asios is to provide Idomeneus with a chariot which he is to remove from the field before Meriones can use it for the conveyance of the corpse. It may be answered that to the mind of one whose works are so carefully planned there



is no such thing as a trifle ; an objection must be removed, and an adequate solvent must be provided.

In the location of the passages which indicate the purpose of Idomeneus we recognise the author of the secret prefaces. The details about him look so natural ; who would suspect that the details of the age of Idomeneus and the mode wherein it had affected his powers were all careful preparation for a special function, which is vital to the plot ? Similarly one does not naturally suspect that the innocent *κατά* and *ἐταίρων*, etc., of the prologue harbour the *εἰκὰς τετράς θ'* which will some day be of vital consequence for the vindication of the author's claim to his own work.

If the dirges are to sound genuine, the persons who pronounce them should be seen in their domestic relations with the hero, and in consequence an opportunity has to be found wherein those domestic relations can be illustrated. A mother and a wife Hektor naturally has ; we have seen the necessity which provided him with a sister-in-law in Helen. Since the Trojan forces are in the field till they are finally driven into the city by Achilles, it is not quite easy to find such an occasion. The *teratologia* of the fifth book, the reason for which has been seen, provides one. When Diomed can perform such a marvel as to rob Aeneas of his horses, the only chance of salvation is to make special supplication to Athene ; Hektor listens to the advice of his brother, the prophet Helenos, and resorts to this method of averting doom. The advice of the same Helenos is afterwards followed when he suggests a single combat ; and lest he should be there to advise Hektor once more after Achilles has returned to the

field, he has to be wounded and sent home. Few scenes in either Poem are so profoundly affecting as the parting with Andromache in Book vi., and the scenes with Hekabe and Helen also serve their purpose admirably. As has been seen, since *ex hypothesi* Hektor must be overcome by one greater than himself in physical strength, this deficiency can be compensated by private virtues; whence Hektor is made a blameless man in all domestic relations, whereas Achilleus is a libertine.

One is inclined to wonder why the Poet, who has so rich a store of proper names, should have given two of the leading heroes the same—Aias. The most obvious clue here is the fact that the two together discharge a vital function: and indeed they appear to derive their name from it

ὧς αἰεὶ Αἴαντε μάχην ἀνέεργον ὀπίσσω  
(xviii. 752). Thus did the two Aias “continually” hold back the onslaught. The two of them are required, because the Trojans have two leaders of equal capacity, Hektor and Aeneas. But, as they are to be the equals of these two primary heroes, they are assigned in the earlier part of the work exploits which qualify them for their part, and they are differentiated; the son of Telamon—it is suggested that his father gets his name from the “strap” which some one had bound round the ankle of Patroklos, thereby incurring his death at the hands of this Aias (xvii. 290, 293)—is the better fighter of the two; the son of Oileus has no rival in the pursuit of fugitives (xv. 521). In the first attack on the ships the two stand beside each other (xiii. 701). Each of them has an illegitimate half-

brother, named respectively Teukros and Medon; the latter is killed by Aeneas, and the former, who is a bowman, breaks his bowstring when aiming at Hektor (xv. 463). The Telamonian Aias, who might have been called Hektor, had not that name been already used, is the defender of the ships when the chief Achæan heroes are wounded; hence his ships are placed where they will be the first to be attacked, and this depends on the geographical formation, which was well known to the Poet. The person with whom Aias is associated here has certainly a functional name: Protesilaos, "first disembarker of troops."

The need for Odysseus is less conspicuous, and his part in the work is in most cases such as might have been discharged by others. There is one place where he is necessary, and that is the tenth Book, where he does the disagreeable parts of the nightly expedition. Worming his secrets out of a man and then putting him to death is an operation unworthy of the heroic Diomed, whence some one else must do it for him. The need for him having arisen here—and his name which suggests something offensive is functional—he can elsewhere be employed as orator and diplomatist.

One who considers the elaboration of the tactics in Books xi.–xvii. is inclined to wonder whether it did not require something analogous to the writing of the Poems. If the verses had only existed in their author's mind, such a structure could scarcely have arisen. The amount of thought required calls for some place where it can be deposited; something permanent, which can indeed change, but unless altered remains fixed. Hence the idea arises that the elaboration of the tactics demanded

something similar, such as we could find in a game of Chess. That game is a mimicry of war ; the pieces have different values, and different rights of motion. There are corresponding pieces on each side. The largest number of squares are occupied by pawns. The progress of the game is marked by the taking of pieces, and Homer uses *ἐλεν* at times in a sense which is very like the "take" of Chess. At the back of the operations which are so complicated, yet so consistent, it may be conjectured that there was a model in the playing of some game.

Now the present work is not a commentary on either Poem, but merely an attempt to reconstruct the sort of analysis which underlies the treatise of Aristotle. Hence it is not necessary to suggest the reason for the introduction of each episode or the insertion of each line. When however the student sees the authenticity of any line or passage questioned, he should first of all verify the reference and see whether the critic is not misstating or misunderstanding ; and in the rare cases where this simple explanation will not settle the matter, consider whether somewhere else in the work there may not be a passage which is also involved. For the student who appreciates the work will perceive that every part of it is simultaneously in the author's mind. A critic of *Od. i. 51*, where it is stated that Odysseus is suffering in a

*νήσος δεινδρήεσσα, θεὰ δ' ἐν δώματα ναίει*

asks what the forestry of the island can matter. The line in fact says nothing about the forestry of the island ; it merely stated that it is tree-clad. Athene is speaking. If she is wisdom, the power of planning,

then it matters a great deal, when the question is how a man is to get off an island, whether it has trees or not. Indeed if the forestry were detailed, as it is in v. 239, it would not be superfluous ; for the Greek boat-builders chose different timber for seacraft and for rivercraft, and for the different parts of the same boat. A Robinson Crusoe plans escape from his island because there is timber ; only he cannot build seaworthy craft. Hence this word *δενδρήεσσα* is by no means without force ; it suggests the means of getting away which could occur to a man of strength and skill. There was at least timber on the island. Was it of the right sort for the purpose ? That will be told us presently.

In this case we apparently have before us a “ perpetual epithet ” ; some one attacks it, and it retaliates in such a way as to silence the objector. In the final combat between Hektor and Achilleus, the latter misses in his first shot ; let the reader not suppose this is without a reason ; if he thinks a little, he will find an excellent reason for it. Some tried to eject a line which brought Aias into connexion with the Athenians : a little study of the Poem shows that line flatly refusing to be turned out. In the long lists of casualties it is likely that the same will prove to be the case ; the persons removed may be pawns, but even a pawn will occasion trouble unless it is taken, and until it is taken it must be on the board and occupy a square. And since the number of pieces on the board is limited, the piece which takes the pawn must be brought from some other part of the board, whence it must move according to the rules of its motion.

The ancients in their criticism of the Homeric Poems



displayed far more caution and ordinarily more knowledge than the moderns ; yet the cases wherein those criticisms prove just seem rare. Aristotle objects to the employment of a *deus ex machina* in the case of " the Simple One," *i.e.* (as we learn from the dialogue *Hippias Minor*) in the fact that whereas Achilles declares his intention of sailing home, he does nothing of the kind. No *deus ex machina* is required. Suppose he sails home, one of two things will occur. Either the expedition will fail, and its failure will be attributed to his desertion ; or it will succeed, when it will be proved that he was not, as he supposed, indispensable. He may therefore say he means to sail away, but he cannot in fact do it. If Odysseus reports that this is the intention which Achilles has expressed, it is doubtless with the view of not widening the breach between Agamemnon and Achilles ; to report that Achilles had said that he means to wait till you are all slaughtered before he intervenes would probably have had that effect. It seems to have been left to the moderns to doubt the genuineness of the ninth Book ; those who had any idea of the structure of the Poem were aware that it was as necessary as any one of the twenty-four.

The assignation of different Achæan heroes to different cities is probably based in part on political and geographical knowledge, in part on personal sentiment, and in part on etymology. When the name of Achilles is derived from ἄχος, that of his country seems to be derived from φθίω, *Od.* xi. 558. The Poet is no friend of the Boeotians ; he chooses Thebes as a *corpus vile* for the experiment of Diomed, and makes the Boeotian leader commence the rout in Book xvii. 597.

The hegemony of Mykenae is likely to be in agreement with the political conditions of the Poet's time, or such time as immediately preceded his; and the relations between that city and Lakedaemon are likely to represent some political fact of the same period. His own island, Ios, is left out, probably because his own attitude to the combatants is strictly neutral.

This matter, however, does not come within the scope of our inquiry, which is limited to the consideration of the Poems as works of art on which Aristotle based his rules.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PLAN OF THE ODYSSEY

IF the germ of the *Iliad* is the Praise of a Man, that of the *Odyssey* is the Praise of a Woman, whence the eulogy of Penelope by Agamemnon in xxiv. 191 foll. Here too the first point to be determined is a suitable occasion. Such an occasion cannot be found in this life, because, as Perikles says, the less heard of a woman in this life whether for good or ill, the better. Hence the scene must be laid in another world, where such a rule is not likely to apply. And since woman is not at this time regarded as an independent being, but as subordinate to man, the most suitable person to utter the encomium is a man who has been ruined by his wife's treachery, the woman whom he praises being one whose fidelity has restored her husband's fortunes when they were at their lowest ebb.

As before then the species precedes the individual; the thought of the eulogy and the best occasion for its delivery suggest personages. There is an obvious advantage in utilizing some with whom the reader of the *Iliad* is already familiar. For thereby some of the trouble will be saved. The personages whom the germ of the work reveals are already more than four; the king who has been ruined, and the king who has been saved. The faithless queen and the faithful queen. Further a paramour for the faithless woman, and a number of suitors for the faithful one. The events suggested are the success attained by the first king

and his subsequent ruin ; and the disasters undergone by the second and his subsequent recovery. Of these the first group can be assumed by making the successful king Agamemnon leader of the expedition against Troy. He comes back victorious in order to lose everything through his wife's perfidy. Of the heroes in the *Iliad* another may be selected for the part of the other king. Odysseus is chosen, and perhaps when the *Iliad* was composed the Poet had anticipated some part of the rôle which he was afterwards to assign him.

Besides this the author of fiction who has succeeded in interesting his readers in the creations of his fancy may count on their desire to know more about them. It is rarely that sequels succeed, because the character of fiction is, as has been seen, a group of qualities, required for a particular function ; the same group will not serve again, whence in the sequel the old characters have a tendency to be mere ghosts of their former selves. It was a stroke of genius on Homer's part to introduce several of the heroes of the *Iliad* actually as ghosts, in his wonderful *Inferno*. Yet the theory that the introduction of the heroes of the *Iliad* (with the exception of Agamemnon and Odysseus) into the *Odyssey* was for the purpose of telling the reader what had become of them is incorrect. They are introduced in that work, whether in the *Inferno* or outside it, for the purposes of the *Odyssey* ; because what they say and do is requisite for the working out of its plot. But by gratifying the curiosity of the reader as to their fate the Poet has introduced a fresh charm.

The main problem of the *Odyssey* is : **Given a king who**

on a foreign expedition has lost all his followers, and whose queen is beset by suitors, who aim at the king's throne: how is he to recover his queen and his throne with the minimum of extra help? He can only accomplish this by unusual astuteness and ability; how then will it be possible to account for his finding himself in such a condition? How came he to lose all his followers and return alone? How this second matter is treated will be seen in a moment. We shall commence by considering how the first problem is solved.

If one man is to confront and put to death a great number—118 is that which is given in the *Odyssey*—certain conditions are indispensable.

1. They must all be gathered in one room.
2. Of that room he must command the doorway.
3. They must be disarmed.
4. He must be armed with an instrument like a repeating carbine, wherewith he can repeatedly deal death from a distance.<sup>1</sup>

Of these conditions two are fulfilled by Penelope, who encourages the Suitors to assemble in the Hall of the Palace, and provides the Bow. The remainder are fulfilled by Odysseus, who in his capacity of Beggar commands the doorway, while he also sees to the disarming of the Suitors.

It is necessary that the Suitors should be the sons of the king's own nobles, partly in order that they may stay in Ithaka indefinitely, but still more because if they are foreigners the whole problem will become too easy. Odysseus will have the sympathy of the Ithakesians in his attack on them. If however they

<sup>1</sup> Cf Euripides, *Herakl.* M. 196-200.



are the sons of his nobles, their parents will want to avenge their deaths. This difficulty is a most serious one, as the victory of Odysseus will be of little use if he is immediately confronted with another hostile army. To solve it, at least to a reasonable extent, two characters are invented. One of these is Laertes, whom his son's return can rejuvenate to such an extent that he can influence the people of Ithaka; before that he has to be decrepit, else the whole story would break down. The other person is Telemachos. He can declare in the presence of gods and men that the Suitors are not guests, but intruders, so that when they are killed, their parents in desiring to avenge them will at least be put in the wrong.

The creation of Telemachos has a still more important purpose. The expedient for dealing with the Suitors is assembling them in one room, where they eat the food of Odysseus. If Odysseus kills guests who have his food in their stomachs, he will incur the vengeance of the gods, whose aid he will need in his further struggle with the parents; *he* can not give them public warning to depart, as his plan is to disguise himself. Penelope's plan is to give them ostensible encouragement. Hence Telemachos is required for this matter which is from the Poet's point of view of vital importance. If Odysseus has Zeus and Athene on his side, he need not fear the Suitors or their parents. (xxi. 28, xvi. 260).

This does not exhaust the functions of Telemachos; there are further vital matters for which he is required. Yet it is likely that the purpose for which he is first introduced is that which suggested the creation. He has to perform that service which Odysseus and Penelope

for different reasons cannot perform, yet which is a preliminary condition of their success.

The expedient for giving Odysseus command of the doorway is to disguise him as a beggar. The expedient for disarming the Suitors is to give him the co-operation of Telemachos; a beggar would not be permitted to remove the arms from the hall. If Telemachos is to co-operate with him, he must be sure of his identity; and so the difficulty arises: Odysseus must be so disguised that old servants fail to recognize him; how then can his son recognize him, having been an infant in arms when his father went away? The expedient for dealing with this matter is to educate Telemachos for the purpose. An excellent reason for his going on his travels is furnished by his open defiance of the Suitors; after that it will be unsafe for him to remain. As, however, his absence is to be short, another reason is found: he is fired by the fame of Orestes, who has avenged his father's death, to take some trouble to learn his father's fate. His chief lessons are obtained from Helen and Nestor; the latter recognizes him as the son of Odysseus by his voice and expressions; and the former by his hands, feet and hair—at least Menelaos interprets her method thus. The hair can be easily faked, but not the feet and hands; Penelope afterwards identifies Odysseus by these parts of the body. Further for his father disguising himself as a beggar he is prepared by Helen, who narrates how once Odysseus disguised himself as one, and indeed as a particular beggar, whom he by no means resembled, and was detected by no one save herself. Menelaos also prepares him for his father's

apparent callousness when they first meet, an occasion whereon Odysseus displays such ignorance of the affairs of Ithaka as would surely excite suspicion if he afterwards claimed to be its missing king. He recollects how when the heroes were collected in the Trojan Horse, and Helen imitated the voices of all their wives, Odysseus alone kept his head ! And yet it might be remembered that it is he who in the *Iliad* asserted that absence from one's wife for a month was trying !

It does not appear that the invention of the Trojan Horse has in the first place any use but the education of Telemachos ; but by repeating the story in another context it is given plausibility. If an assertion is reiterated it is likely to be believed. Helen has to be something of a traveller in her youth in order to make the acquaintance of all the ladies whose voice she can mimic ; but we have not her complete biography.

Just as the death of Agamemnon was used in order to find a motive for the journey of Telemachos, so it can be used in order to furnish a reason for his disembarking at a haven where he would be unexpected, and where he can meet Odysseus. Agamemnon falls because an ambush has been laid and a spy set to watch and give warning of his arrival ; the Suitors try the same plan, but warned by the fate of Agamemnon Telemachos frustrates their scheme.

The notion of a Telemachid as a separate poem is so extraordinary that it is difficult to believe that it has seriously been maintained. His travels are an expedient for the plot ; if he, who is not even convinced that he is the son of Odysseus, must recognize Odysseus for the purposes of the story, proper means of identification

must be put into his power ; and among other things he must have some adequate reason for believing that his father is still living. This last is not to be achieved without the aid of the supernatural ; Menelaos is brought into touch with Egyptian magic whence he can learn what is not to be ascertained by ordinary means.

In the travels of Odysseus the visit to the Inferno is educational in the same sense as those of Telemachos. The immediate reason for this visit seems to be that the Poet found it necessary, for the ground which has been mentioned, to place the delivery of the encomium on Penelope in the Lower World ; it is better that we should be familiar with its geography before we are brought thither for the original purpose. The chief reason for sending Odysseus thither is doubtless to enable him to learn from his mother something about the affairs of Ithaka. He is to be told that his wife is still faithful, and, what is more important, that no immediate danger threatens his son ; on the contrary Telemachos is petted. Further he is to learn from the fate of Agamemnon the danger of an open return ; had Agamemnon come home disguised, he would have evaded the assassins.

There is however a matter of equal importance with these which lies a little below the surface. Odysseus is not a faithful husband, and, if he returns home, will have to face the relatives of the troops whom he has lost ; and until he receives the gifts of the Phaeakians he is really and not merely in disguise a beggar. Why then does he reject the chances which are offered him of establishing himself elsewhere, with Kalypso, or

with Nausikaa, or even with Kirke ? For this an answer is provided by the ghost of Achilleus : he has all that can be obtained down below, and cares for none of it ; one thing only matters and that consoles him when he hears of it—*his son's prosperity*. Telemachos then provides the motive for the fidelity of Odysseus to Ithaka ; he should look after his son, because when this life is over, a son's prosperity is all that matters.

But a difficulty arises. Agamemnon has been selected as the person who is to pronounce the eulogy on Penelope in the lower world. And he does so because his own wife's treachery has ruined him. But, if *his* son has acquired glory by avenging his father's death, and a son's glory is the one thing that matters to the dead, Agamemnon's eulogy will lose its force ; he will have every reason to be as proud as Achilleus. A way must therefore be found to keep the news of the exploit of Orestes from the dead Agamemnon ; and it is done by introducing the episode with Aias. Aias has quarrelled with Odysseus and when they meet in the Inferno, Aias declines to speak. Hence we need not fear that Aegisthos or Klytaemnestra will have informed Agamemnon of the exploit of Orestes ; their old enmity will continue in the lower world.

A reader of the Odyssey who considers the elaborateness of these expedients will see the same mind working on a large scale as is revealed by the cryptograms on a small scale. If anything is removed the whole collapses ; but where each brick is to go is a matter of deep reflection. The main motive for the conduct of Odysseus has to be fitted in with the starting-point of the whole work ; a difficulty in Book xxiv. which will



be caused by something in Book i. taken in connexion with something in Book xi. has to be met by a suitable fiction and is met. It is of course most interesting to the reader of the *Iliad* to hear what became of those Arms of Achilles whose workmanship is so minutely described ; as it is besides to hear what was the end of Aias the greater. But gratification of the reader's curiosity is not the main reason for these fictions ; they are required for the support of the *Odyssey* itself.

Whether every scene in the *Inferno* can be traced in a similar way to the needs of the *Odyssey* is not perhaps clear ; the story of the origin of Nestor's house is perhaps for the purpose of explaining the interest taken by Poseidon in that family, to which the *Iliad* alludes.

When Odysseus descends to the *Inferno* the ghosts of women gather around him. Doubtless they want to know the fortunes of their descendants (xi. 542) ; in order to answer their questions Odysseus has to find out who they are. That women are more inquisitive than men, and that family matters interest them more, is a widespread opinion ; hence in making them press forward to enquire of the new-comer the Poet follows probability. Who shall say what part of the tales which follow was told by them to Odysseus or by Odysseus to them ? These heroines however prepare for the praise of Penelope to which everything leads up. They had all one qualification, beauty, which made them the mistresses of gods ; what else is told about them is painful or discreditable. The praise of Penelope is of a very different sort ; the others possess the gifts of Aphrodite, she possesses those of Athene as well.

She is not merely the mother of a famous son or the wife of a famous hero ; her part in the saving of the house is as great as, possibly greater than, that of Odysseus. Hence the Vision of Fair Women flows naturally from the celebration of Penelope's exploits in the Lower World.

In order to bring Odysseus to the Lower World he has to be brought into communication with a witch ; and before he can trust her ability to procure such communication for him, she must give some proof of her powers. Witches, besides necromancy, can transform men into animals ; whether Homer first invented this function or not, whenever we meet with witches, they are found practising this power ; in the Arabian Nights they turn men into dogs ; in the Ass of Lucian or Appuleius they turn them into an animal that is no less useful, but less esteemed. The potion of Kirke like the song of the Sirens has been interpreted allegorically so often that both have become proverbial ; but it is not probable that the first idea in the creation of either was allegory. Odysseus is sent to the Lower World to obtain information which he will be unable to obtain in this ; in order to get there he must put himself in the hands of a witch ; and that witch must give proof of her ability. But it adds to the merit of the fiction if it can be made to bear an allegorical interpretation.

A question which arises with regard to Odysseus's voyage to the Lower World is this : Why, when he has left it, must he return to Kirke's Island ? An expedient is invented to make him return ; Elpenor breaks his neck in his hurry to embark, and his ghost will not be

laid till his corpse has been properly burned. Hence Odysseus has to go back, though his former experience of returning to an island which he had visited would not make such a step advisable. The reason for his return appears to be this. It is very clear that Kirke knows much more about his way home than does Tiresias ; the ostensible reason for his voyage to the Inferno is not therefore the real one. But it is doubtful whether Kirke can be trusted. She is a goddess and has been flouted by Odysseus and made to acknowledge defeat ; and though she has sworn that she will not devise any mischief against him, this oath probably refers only to his first visit, and she may well be expected to take her revenge if she can get it. This she gets by her *advice about the Sirens*. Acting by her advice Odysseus abandons his authority and puts himself into the power of Eurylochos ; hence, when they are confronted with the famine, the authority of Eurylochos counts for more than that of Odysseus. One further fact that strikes the reader about the only two homeward passages is this : How did Odysseus get to the Aeaean Isle at all ? For clearly he got thither, and had not to pass either the Planktae or Skylla and Charybdis. Hence it would seem that Kirke, though she did not devise any further mischief for Odysseus, put him in the way of ruining himself and his companions.

Hence it is necessary for him to return to Kirke's Island. Since his reason for going to the Inferno is ostensibly to consult Tiresias about his return, Kirke cannot give him the information which she is to detail *before* he goes there ; if she did, there would be no

ostensible reason for his going there at all. Since however Kirke's advice is necessary for the plot, she must give it *after* he has seen Tiresias. Hence his return to her island is inevitable.

The purpose of the Wanderings of Odysseus is, as has been seen, to explain how this man of many wiles came to lose all his companions. But he does not lose them for nothing ; on each occasion he obtains a lesson which will help him when a similar situation arises.

In the order of the adventures we may notice the following. Owing to his experience in the land of the Lotophagi Odysseus does some scouting himself when they come to the land of the Kyklops ; his experience there makes him cautious afterwards about revealing his name. The purpose of the visit to the Isle of Aeolus is in the main to throw the burden of their disasters upon the Companions ; but Odysseus learns from it the necessity of vigilance, which he afterwards observes when he is in his own palace. Owing to the experience with the Kyklops, when they come to the Laestrygonians, Odysseus himself remains with the rear-guard ; thence he is able to save his boat when the rest are smashed. This particular fiction enables the poet to get rid of the bulk of the companions at a single stroke ; to have invented expedients for destroying them boat by boat would have been tedious. Much the same motive is found in the invention of Kalypso ; to fill ten years with adventures would have been too great a strain even on Homer's imagination ; Kalypso enables him to fill a whole number of years with a few strokes.

Phaeakia, as its name implies, is a halfway house

between fairyland and the real world ; Odysseus is sent there in order to obtain those presents whose possession will secure to him the fidelity of Penelope when he returns ; and perhaps in order to suggest a way of dealing with the terrible difficulty which has been noticed already : say Odysseus kills the Suitors, how will he escape the vengeance of their parents ? With wealth at his disposal he can do something. Moreover if Kalypso were made to send him home safely with adequate presents, there would be no suitable occasion for the narration of his adventures ; which is perhaps the chief object of his visit to Phaeakia.

When Odysseus is installed as a beggar at the door of his palace, the main expedient has to be provided by Penelope. It is the bow which Odysseus alone can draw ; and for this performance the reader is prepared by the statement made by the hero at the Phaeakian court that as a bowman he was second only to Philoktetes. The expedient selected has the great advantage that while appearing to favour neither Odysseus nor the Suitors, it in fact arms the former against the latter. Before however Penelope can resort to this she must have some proof that Odysseus is still in possession of his old strength and skill ; and an opportunity for this demonstration is furnished by the Iros incident. For, as Aristotle might say, it would be likely that Odysseus would find another beggar already installed, who would find his trade injured by the intruder.

The Suitors in the Lower World naturally suppose that the expedient of the Bow was due to collusion on the part of the two, Odysseus and Penelope. This is doubtless intended to be merely a conjecture, and the



Poet does not even admit that Penelope recognized Odysseus at their meeting in xix. 99 foll., though he suggests that she identified him by the hands and feet, as Menelaos had done with Telemachos (xix. 359). The demand afterwards made by Penelope for fresh evidence of identity is probably intended as a punishment to him for failing to reveal himself to her as he had to Telemachos. Nor does the Poet tell us how Odysseus would have proceeded had not Penelope thought of this method of arming him. It would have been in accordance with his practice elsewhere if he had let us into that secret by putting an anecdote into the mouth of one of the speakers.

Aristotle criticizes the mode whereby Euryklea is made to recognize Odysseus, but it would seem that an apology is rather required for her failing to recognize him ; for the Poet thereby introduces the same improbability as is involved in those modern fictions wherein an impostor can deceive a father or wife. It would seem that the notion of Klytaemnestra murdering Agamemnon in a bath was taken from consideration of the reasons which moved Odysseus to demand the services of Euryklea. That there was ever any such custom as that which the whole incident involves may well be doubted ; the author appears to have invented it, and emphasized it elsewhere merely for the purpose of this recognition. Since it is by this time assumed that the services of some woman will be required, Odysseus is involved in a difficulty : if he lets himself be bathed by any of the other women, that woman may murder him ; if he employs Euryklea, she may recognize him. He rightly chooses the less serious danger. Whoever

then first made Klytaemnestra the murderess, borrowed this scheme from the Bath-scene in the *Odyssey*: he worked out a hint, and (to judge by the use of it in the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus) exceedingly well. As will be noticed presently, the Tragedians do not appear to have any ideas of their own: they deserve admiration when they employ the Homeric materials skilfully. This cannot be said of Aeschylus in the *Choephoroi*, where Elektra recognizes Orestes by his hair and the resemblance of his footprints to her own: the places in the *Odyssey* whereon this is based, the recognition of Telemachos by Menelaos and afterwards of Odysseus by Penelope, are vastly more probable. Although the scar of Odysseus was invented for this particular occasion, there is no improbability about it. What is less likely is that Euryklea would have had less intelligence than the dogs.

It is noteworthy that Aristotle ignores the operations of the gods in the *Odyssey*, unless the persecution by Poseidon come under this category. But indeed to regard them as anything more than ornament is to mistake the Poet entirely. If the problem is to be worked out, the reader must recognize that the causation employed is natural; if the gods really take any part in the proceedings which is unlike their normal procedure, such recognition will be impossible. A commentator on the Koran asks why thousands of angels were required to win the battle of Badr; one flap of a single angel's wing would have been sufficient to destroy the whole infidel host. Similarly if Athene had wished to bring Odysseus home from Kalypso's isle, and restore him to his throne, she could have done it when Poseidon

was in Aethiopia. Hence any one who takes the operations of the gods at their face value misunderstands the whole work. If Athene can at will change Odysseus from an old man in rags to a young man in fine raiment (xvi. 208-210), she does no more than the modern detective of fiction does without her aid. Dickens is far less extravagant than many of a later time: yet with him "When we had all arrived here, the physician stopped, and taking off his hat, appeared to vanish by magic, and to leave another and quite a different man in his place."<sup>1</sup> Athene is not required to effect this extraordinary change. Athene is rightly identified by the Scholiasts with the mental ability of the person who listens to her counsels. Telemachos starts his career when he has reached "years of discretion"; the surprise of Nestor that one so young should be escorted by a god (iii. 376) is only another expression for the saying that "the young ordinarily act foolishly" (vii. 294). One would gladly know enough of the gods' language—with which Dio Chrysostom suspected that Homer's own acquaintance was not profound—to be able to identify that herb *μῶλυ* (x. 305), which serves as an antidote to witchcraft; whose root is black, but flower white. But, though on this occasion Odysseus obtains this valuable herb by special favour of Hermes, he acts merely like "the one man who keeps sober amongst the delirious" (to use a phrase of Aristotle). Others walk straight into the trap, but he suspects and avoids it; whence it is conceivable that this word in the divine language meant *suspicion*, and nothing more.

<sup>1</sup> *Bleak House*, ch. xxiv.

The suggestion of Alkidamas that the Odyssey was "a fine mirror of human life," *i.e.*, an allegory of the voyage of life, was rejected by Aristotle as "too improbable,"<sup>1</sup> though a later writer, Theophylaktos Simocatta, practically adopts it. Doubtless Aristotle was right in rejecting it as an adequate account of the Odyssey: that, as we have seen, is the solution of a definite problem, of which the result is to be the encomium on a woman. Not for the problem itself—where everything has to follow normal causation—but for explanation of the mode wherein the astute Odysseus has come into the plight which that problem presupposes, the reader is occasionally taken into fairyland; and fairyland, if it is to have any use for instruction, ought to be allegorical. So when Horace identifies one of the Sirens with Sloth (*Desidia*), it is likely that Homer would himself have approved of this interpretation, although as has been seen the incident of the Sirens is of capital importance for this part of the plot. The Kyklops is not altogether unlike Bunyan's Giant Despair, but scarcely to be identified with him; the episode of the Kyklops is that from which Odysseus learns most.

It is quite true that Homer does not often act as his own annotator, and tell us that Telemachos and Odysseus acted in such a way because they remembered what they had learned on some other occasion. But then the subtlety of the objections to which he replies indicates that he rated the intelligence of his readers exceedingly high. When Odysseus comes to Phaeakia and Arete asks him who he is, he avoids that question; a German

<sup>1</sup> Rhetoric 1386 b 12.

critic thinks this most surprising: when people are asked their names, of course they tell them. But Homer may well have thought his readers would argue in the following way. Odysseus has got into trouble by blinding a son of Poseidon, and then telling him his name. He comes into a land where a descendant of Poseidon is on the throne, of whose quarrel with the *Kyklopes* (vi. 5) he knows nothing (vii. 54 foll.). If Odysseus did not evade the question about his name when he is asked it by the queen of this country, it would show that experience was lost upon him; whereas his wisdom lies in learning thereby, and so not committing the same mistake twice. For he has been told by *Tiresias* that his troubles are due to the resentment of Poseidon (xi. 103). It does not exhibit much intelligence on the part of the reader to understand this: but it would seem to display a lamentable want of it not to perceive it. And it is likely that the Poet throughout argued in the same way. If the recognition by *Telemachos* of his father is to be natural, when appearances were so much against Odysseus, *Telemachos* must have been thoroughly prepared for it; and the reader who sees this difficulty will then recollect that there has been preparation for every detail.

Whether *Nestor* and *Menelaos* are located in *Pylos* and *Sparta* respectively for the benefit of the *Odyssey* or, having been previously so located, are for geographical reasons utilized for the education of *Telemachos* cannot easily be determined. The advantage of sending *Menelaos* to *Egypt* is, besides that which we have seen, that he will not be compelled to avenge his brother; by the

<sup>1</sup> *Rhetoric* 1386 b. 12.



time of his return this has already been achieved by Orestes. Of the other *νόστοι* that of the Locrian Aias is intended to prepare us for the vindictiveness of Poseidon ; this hero claimed that he had escaped the sea in defiance of the gods ; he was soon confuted. Odysseus asserted that Poseidon himself would not be able to cure his son's blindness ; and he was pursued for the rest of his cruise by Poseidon's vengeance.

The fact then that Nestor, Menelaos and the rest are familiar from the Iliad does not interfere with the unity of the Odyssey in the sense which was enucleated above ; for the tale of their respective *Nostoi* is not told with the primary object of supplementing an earlier work, but with the view of dealing with difficulties which the expedients for the plot of the Odyssey occasion ; if Telemachos is to be educated for his part he must learn about Odysseus from persons who have had experience of him : the more recent that experience the better. If he is to be warned against landing where the Suitors will be likely to expect him, the story of Agamemnon's death is likely to impress him more than any other, inasmuch as it was the fame acquired by Agamemnon's avenger which first suggested to him to go abroad. If Menelaos can give information about the whereabouts of Odysseus, he had best get that information from some source which will be beyond the reach of Telemachos ; else the latter will wish to go thither himself.

The structure of the Odyssey thus analysed is then found to be precisely similar to that of the Iliad : and though parallels can be found to it in some modern romances, it is unlikely that any of the epics which

were accessible to Aristotle displayed anything of the kind. An Odyssey would to one of these other authors have meant a biography of Odysseus; the author finds out all he can about the mythical hero and arranges it chronologically. To Homer Odysseus is a label not very different from the A B C of geometry; he is invented for the solution of a particular problem, and there is no more of him than is required for that solution.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE TRANSMISSION OF THE HOMERIC POEMS

IN the Preface to the *Odyssey* we see Homer composing the *Iliad* and presenting it to Aeneades. Probably he recited it to him and others. This method of *publishing* a work meets us again in the *Parmenides* of Plato, where Zeno arrives in Athens, bringing his works, which students of philosophy hasten to hear him recite. In Juvenal's time Statius makes the city happy with a recitation<sup>1</sup>; that is how the *Thebais* is "published." If, however, such works are to serve their purpose of solacing the sleepless, which the Preface asserts to be that of the *Odyssey* (where this is achieved by the oral communication of stories<sup>2</sup>), there must be some opportunity of procuring copies. Such a demand speedily produces a *trade*, with an elaborate technique. A profession arises of expert copyists, just as in our time there has arisen a profession of expert typists. It becomes worth the while of enterprising persons to make arrangements whereby copies of such works can be obtained by those who are willing to pay for them.

Now though such amiable philosophers as Plato devised wonderful plans for preventing intercourse between different cities, nature has ordinarily been too powerful for them. The goods produced by one community are required by another; hence trade arises, and the trader makes himself acquainted with the affairs

<sup>1</sup> vii. 83.

<sup>2</sup> xv. 392.

of the city which he visits in pursuance of his calling. Hence the applause wherewith the Iliad was greeted by the people of Ilion became known to foreigners who happened to be staying in that city; and, possibly with the philanthropic desire to give their own countrymen an intellectual treat, but more probably in the hope of making profit honourably, some of these hearers are likely to have procured copies of the work, which they exported, especially to such cities as had received honourable mention in the work. Here, as in Ilion, the new classic either antiquated such literature as had preceded it, or started literature where there was none. Like the works of Vergil and Horace at a later period it got into the hands of the schoolmaster shortly after its publication and became the basis of education.

Since it is not true, as the wounded vanity of some less fortunate authors caused them to assert, that *sua riserunt saecula Maconiden*, but on the contrary the Iliad evoked such admiration that its author was offered an honorarium if he would write again on the same subject, doubtless the fame of the first work prepared a warm welcome for the second, which took beside the Iliad the place which it has ever since occupied. Ilion lasted long enough for the second work to be produced and make its way outside. What happened to that city afterwards is unknown; it had done its work, and presently everything about it was forgotten except what Homer had said.

What steps were taken to secure correctness in the copies is not apparently known. Among the mediaeval Moslems the plan was to read the copy through with the author, who would then license it. An interesting

example is to be found in the case of Hariri, who might be called the Arabic Homer. He would gladly have adopted an emendation which some one suggested to him, but having certified seven hundred copies of his work, felt bound in honour to reject it. Even the most self-satisfied author would find this operation, if conscientiously performed, grow tedious. Perhaps competition between booksellers and rhapsodes was with so acute a nation as the Hellenes sufficient to guarantee scrupulous fidelity in the case of works which every one wished to possess, though the fidelity indicated by the puzzles surpasses anything which might have been anticipated. Little regard should be paid to varieties which appear in quotations found in other books, for the trouble of verifying references was so great before the invention of the quaternion that few writers ever took it. Hence Aristides is able to convict Plato of inaccuracies, and such a professional scholar as Dio Chrysostom can confound Homer with Hesiod.

This seems to be the only reply which we can give to the question of the mode wherein the Homeric Poems were transmitted after they had left their author's hands. We cannot name with certainty the material whereon they were written. The names of the traders who stocked them were forgotten; just as few of us could name offhand the publisher of *Paradise Lost* or of Bentley's *Dissertation on Phalaris*. The Poems had been in circulation for many generations before this question was posed.

The author who appears first to have posed it, and who is the source of later statements on the subject, is Heraklides Ponticus. This ingenious, but not over-



scrupulous, personage was confronted with the following difficulty. The Homeric Poems formed the basis of education in Sparta<sup>1</sup>; doubtless then their study had been prescribed by Lycurgus. But it was well known that Lycurgus got his constitution from Crete<sup>2</sup>; and in Crete the Homeric Poems were practically unknown.<sup>3</sup> Whence then did Lycurgus get them? Obviously he must have gone to the possessors of those poems to acquire them. Hence Lycurgus is sent by Heraklides on a visit to the North.<sup>4</sup>

If some distinguished person brought them to Sparta, it was to be expected that the like had happened in Athens. In Plato's genuine works it is assumed that they were known there in Solon's time; when Solon's poems were still fresh, some one said that if the legislator had chosen he might have acquired as much poetic fame as Homer or Hesiod.<sup>5</sup> Homer was then a celebrity in Athens in Solon's day. Aristotle in the *Constitution of Athens* asserts that Hipparchus invited poets to Athens;<sup>6</sup> as may well have been the case. The fabricator of the Platonic Dialogue called Hipparchus<sup>7</sup> adds that he brought the Homeric Poems to Athens. Even so he proceeds to contradict himself by adding that *he compelled the Rhapsodes at the Panathenaea* to recite the Homeric Poems consecutively as they continue to do. According to this the Poems were already known through the recitations of rhapsodes,

<sup>1</sup> Plutarch, Laconia Apopthegmata, p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, Politics, 1271 b 25.

<sup>3</sup> Plato, Leges 680 c; 887 b.

<sup>4</sup> Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum ii. 210.

<sup>5</sup> Critias 21 c.

<sup>6</sup> § 18.

<sup>7</sup> 228 b.

only (it would seem) there were no copies. It is extraordinary that any attention should have been paid to the statement of this anonymous author; for even Plato cannot be trusted on historical matters, as Aristides proved. The sentence about the rhapsodes is interpreted for us in a comment on Dionysius Thrax,<sup>1</sup> which leaves no doubt about its foolish meaning. What is meant by a *Rhapsode*? Clearly a *cento-singer*, one who picks out a verse here and there, and out of material so collected produces an ode suitable for some occasion or other; an epithalamium, for example, such as was composed by Ausonius out of Vergilian lines. This gives an excellent etymology for the word Rhapsode; the only inconvenience being that the rhapsodes did nothing of the kind. In the *Ion* ascribed to Plato we are introduced to one; he recits *scenes*, such as the affecting passage wherein Hektor parts from Andromache, or the portion of the *Odyssey* wherein Odysseus dispatches the Suitors.<sup>2</sup> What does the etymologist do in such a case? He acts as according to Brachet a French etymologist acted who derived *chat* from *felis*. "First they said *felicus*, then they said *felicatus*, then this was reduced to *catus*." There was indeed no evidence that the intermediate forms had ever been used; but of course they might have been. Similarly though the rhapsodes were by no means *cento-singers*, very likely they had at one time been; some one must have compelled them to change their ways. Who can it have been? Doubtless Hipparchus.

At a later period Solon gets the credit for bringing the Poems to light. And this was proper, for what

<sup>1</sup> Bekker's *Anecdota*, 766, 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ion* 535 b.

Lycurgus was to Sparta that was Solon to Athens. Cicero, who only on this occasion is regarded as a serious authority on the history of Hellenic literature, substituted the name of Pisistratus for that of Hipparchus, and so there comes into existence the fiction of a Pisistræan recension, about which the ancient Homeric critics know nothing.

There is no reason for attaching any importance to any one of these fictions, no-one of which is earlier than Heraklides Ponticus. We are told that the first commentator on Homer was one Theagenes of Rhegium, who was a contemporary of Cambyses, *i.e.*, lived towards the end of the sixth century B.C. If the Poet's fame had got as far as Italy by that date it is likely to have reached Athens somewhat before. Hesiod is doubtless about a century earlier than Theagenes, if not far earlier still; the Scholia on Homer justly charge him with mistaking the meaning of Homer.<sup>1</sup> The "Boeotian Swine" are not likely to have been earlier than others in obtaining the Poems.

Without knowing anything about the character of the literature which preceded the Homeric Poems our attention is struck by the fact that they are designated as *Scripture* probably before that name was ever applied to the Jewish Bible. When a passage of the second book of the Iliad is discussed in the Ion of Euripides, that is how it is quoted.<sup>2</sup> In a passage of Aeschylus which is somewhat obscure the Chorus tell Agamemnon that he has been "written without the inspiration of the Muses"<sup>3</sup> as having organized an expedition for the

<sup>1</sup> Schol. B on Il. iv. 59, vi. 181, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Ion 271.

<sup>3</sup> Agamemnon 801.

recovery of Helen ; the point of this seems clearly to be that Homer had claimed inspiration by the Muse for his *Iliad* ; and Aeschylus, who not unfrequently criticizes his chief source, asserts that so improbable a motive could not have been due to such inspiration. Indeed Herodotus calls attention to a similar improbability in the conduct of Priam as it appears in the *Iliad* ; he would have let Helen go even if he had been married to her himself.<sup>1</sup> The notion that Agamemnon might be confronted with what Homer had written about him involves no greater anachronism than that which occurs in the case of Kreusa in the *Ion*.

In Greek of the early classical age then the Homeric Poems are designated *Scripture*, and this at least implies a period when they were the only written books. Plato emphatically uses the word *write* of Homer,<sup>2</sup> and it would seem that the first person who knows of an oral period is an authority on Hellenic literature about as high as Cicero, viz. Flavius Josephus.<sup>3</sup> According to him " various discrepancies " were explained by that oral tradition. It is not clear whether he means differences of reading or inconsistencies ; if he is speaking the truth—which it must be admitted is by no means always the case—it is a remarkable fact that in the eight volumes of *Scholia* which have been published this explanation does not seem to be once advanced to account for either.

Authorities who have at least the right to be called Hellenic do indeed speak of the Homeric Poems having been brought to light, and at some period within our

<sup>1</sup> ii. 120.

<sup>2</sup> *Leges* 858 e.

<sup>3</sup> *Against Apion*, p. 439.

era Pisistratus comes in. An author of about the third century A.D., Diogenes Laertius, quotes an earlier writer, Dieuchidas of Megara, to contradict the assertion that Pisistratus brought them to light.<sup>1</sup> Solon is quoted for a law that Homer's verses should be recited ἐξ ὑποβολῆς, which is said to mean "where one stopped, the other should commence."<sup>2</sup> The writer, or Dieuchidas, whom he quotes, rightly infers that Solon rather than Pisistratus must have brought the works to light. Since this supposed law would imply that the Poems were recited like "catches," Diogenes thinks the law can only have applied to the passage about Athens in Iliad ii. It is far from clear that the rendering of Diogenes is right; ἐξ ὑποβολῆς means elsewhere "by prompting,"<sup>3</sup> or "by substitution."<sup>4</sup> Probably then the whole statement is a misquotation of that in the Hipparchus with which we have already dealt, in which some one had substituted Solon for Hipparchus on the ground which Dieuchidas uses against Pisistratus. Dieuchidas is first cited by Plutarch, about 100 A.D. The word which he uses for "bring to light" is late, being first cited from Polybius; the older phrase is ἐκφέρειν εἰς τὸ φῶς.<sup>5</sup> The date of this author is further to be fixed by his account of the islands called Ἀραί, between Cnidus and Syme. This is evidently the Latin *Arae*, which Vergil says is the Italian name for rocks in the middle of the sea. These islands cannot

<sup>1</sup> ἐφώτισεν.

<sup>2</sup> Diog. Laert. I. ix. 57.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus, Autobiography, 54.

<sup>4</sup> The same, B.J. II. vii. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Plato, Parmenides, 128 d.



well have got this name before Pompey's war against the pirates.<sup>1</sup> Dieuchidas must therefore be contemporary with, or more probably later than Cicero.

Cicero's statement is probably the source of the promotion of Pisistratus to the editorship of Homer, and the task which the Roman orator assigns him is that of having "reduced the books of Homer to the order wherein they are now read." The paragraph wherein this sentence occurs tells us much which is not otherwise recorded<sup>2</sup>; thus we learn that the Seven Sages with the exception of Thales were all heads of states; and that Pisistratus was the most learned orator of his time, whose eloquence was the most cultured. Further we learn that Pisistratus lived at the very same time as the Seven Sages. With regard to the first of these statements, it is curious how different was the information which had reached Plato. "What is the reason" asks his Sokrates<sup>3</sup> "that the men of old times who have a high reputation for wisdom, Pittakos, Bias, the Milesian Thales, and those of later times down to Anaxagoras, all of them, or the greater number of them, appear to have kept clear of political activity?" But according to Cicero *hi omnes praeter Milesium Thalem civitatibus suis praefuerunt!* Of the eloquence and learning of Pisistratus no one else seems to have heard; Plato, who pays a somewhat similar compliment to Perikles, does not even allude to the cultured eloquence of Pisistratus.<sup>4</sup> Since the career of Pisistratus appears

<sup>1</sup> Athenaeus 262 c.

<sup>2</sup> *De Oratore* iii. 187.

<sup>3</sup> Hippias Major 281 c.

<sup>4</sup> Phaedrus 269 c.

to have begun the year that Pittakos died, the phrase *iisdem illis temporibus* is far from accurate. In the same treatise of Cicero we read the complaint that none of the Greeks believes the Romans to understand anything whatever.<sup>1</sup> If the performances of the latter were to be judged by this passage of Cicero, we should be disposed to sympathize with the Greeks. And it is after a series of blunders of this sort that we come to the assertion that Pisistratus is said to have been the first to arrange the Books of Homer in their existing order, they having been confused before !

The blunders are so thick that there seems a possibility that some Greek intentionally misled the Orator, with the view of seeing what sort of information he would be ready to swallow. Tricks of this sort are sometimes played, though they are of course indefensible. Perhaps however they are merely inaccurate reminiscences of the Platonic passage, which Cicero did not take the trouble to verify, probably holding with justice that most of his readers would not detect any inaccuracy, should it be there. The service however which he attributes to the tyrant is so remarkable that the former of these suggestions seems on the whole the more probable. Compelling the rhapsodes to abandon their inartistic practice of reciting centos is a more suitable act for a tyrant than arranging displaced "books." Indeed since a "Book" is usually supposed to be a single roll with its contents, it would seem extraordinary that no one had thought of getting them in the right order before. The volumes of a large work frequently get displaced on their shelves ; the operation of getting

<sup>1</sup> ii. 77.

them right is so slight that it is not worth recording. The difficulty would be to find any one who had not done it occasionally, at least among those who possess voluminous works. Hence this passage indicates the humour of some Greek joker, who took the measure of Cicero's learning.

Aelian has the merit of trying to assign a meaning to the process, but it is not very convincing. He suggests that the ancients chanted the books in a confused order; *e.g.*, Iliad xv., x., xi., ii., xvi., xxiv., xxii., iii. (or portions of those books).<sup>1</sup> Pisistratus made up the whole work out of the MSS. brought over by Lycurgus. To this the reply is that the books can very well take care of their own order. It would not require the learning with which Cicero credits Pisistratus to know that Hektor must be killed before his corpse can be redeemed, or that the War must start before it can be stopped.

It is really clear that Cicero or his informant is producing what he had read in the Hipparchus, and has confused the son with the father. And since a stream cannot go higher than its source, this statement goes back ultimately to a false etymology of *rhapsode*. The author who explains that the Poems were "stitched together" by Pisistratus<sup>2</sup> has really got to the root of the matter. Only whereas in the first variety of the etymology, Hipparchus prevented the rhapsodes from "patching" in the later variety his father does the patching himself.

The notion that the books were first got into their

<sup>1</sup> *Varia Historia* xiii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Bekker's *Anecdota*, l. c.

right order by Pisistratus is refuted by all that we know of the early, though post-Homeric, poetry of the Hellenes. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* would be unintelligible in any order save that in which their author gave them to the world. And we find these early poets well acquainted with the contents of both poems, and piecing together information out of both. They had no more, but they had no less than has come down to us.

Plutarch does not apparently know of the supposed service of Pisistratus, whence the allusion to it by Dieuchidas, though he contradicts it, is surprising. Still the name of Cicero was famous throughout the Roman Empire, and something may have got from his writings into the ears of contemporary Greeks. It is at first either refuted or neglected; later on it is repeated, and in the encyclopaedia of Suidas the edition of Pisistratus takes its place beside the others.

The "whole voice of antiquity" of Wolf is not, however, Cicero or Josephus, ludicrous as it would be to trust either on the history of Greek literature; it is "a Scholiast, by no means worthy to be mentioned, had he not got his information from the same Alexandrian remains as Josephus."<sup>1</sup> This writer, a Byzantine of about 1000 A.D., is so worthless that Bekker, who reprinted various comments on Dionysius Thrax which had been published in Villoison's *Anecdota*, omitted his remarks from his own work of the same name. Wolf's quotation of this person is in the highest degree disingenuous and inaccurate. The words, as cited by Wolf, are ἦν γάρ, ὥς φασιν, ἀπολόμενα τὰ τοῦ Ὀμήρου· τότε γὰρ οὐ γραφῇ παρεδίδοντο, ἀλλὰ μόνῃ

<sup>1</sup> Prolegomena § 18.

διδασκαλία ὡς ἂν μνήμονι φυλάττοιτο. If this text were right, it would mean that Homer's works were lost, in which case they could not have been preserved in the memory of any one. But the text in Villoison<sup>1</sup> has ἀπολλόμενα, a Byzantine form for ἀπολλύμενα. But what Wolf omits is the source of the information, which is to be found in the preceding words : wherein it is said that a Rhapsody is ἡ ἐπὶ ράβδῳ ᾠδή· "for those after Homer went about singing his poems, holding ράβδον δαφνίνην, σύμβολον Ἀπολλωνιτικόν. ἣν γὰρ ἀπολλόμενα, etc." This learned man derives the word "Apollonitic" from the Greek verb "to destroy"; the rhapsode according to him held a "destructive" wand, which signified that the Poems were going to ruin; and that, he explains, was because there was only an oral tradition of them !

Where then do Wolf's Alexandrians come in ? They do not come in at all, for "the whole voice of antiquity" gets its information from an etymology which is so ridiculous that Wolf is afraid to cite it. But no other witness answers his call. Arranging books which had been confused in their due order is a very different thing from committing them to writing; and Josephus does not mention Pisistratus. If such writers as Plutarch and Aelian deserve citation, Wolf should have admitted that they speak of Lycurgus as having read and fetched the Poems. Hence it does not seem possible to acquit Wolf of intentionally deceiving his readers.

When Wolf wished to justify his designation of an ignorant Byzantine of the Middle Ages as *vox totius*

<sup>1</sup> II. 182 n.



*antiquitatis*, he fell back on the supposition that this Byzantine had got his information from the Alexandrians. He had not ; he had obtained it from his own etymological operations. But even if he had, there would be no justification for setting the suppositions of the Alexandrians against the testimony of writers who, belonging to an earlier period of Greek history, were nearer the source. If therefore Plato is positive that Homer was a *writer*, what would it matter if Aristarchus had suggested that his lays had gone through a period of oral tradition before they were committed to writing ? If indeed the statement of Josephus were made about some author who rarely occupies the attention of the writers of the classical period, we might suppose him to be producing a tradition which had come to him in some earlier work which has since been lost ; but Homer is constantly in the minds of the earlier classics, and is quoted by Plato literally hundreds of times ; his contemporary Isocrates mentions regular discussions on Homer in the Lyceum.<sup>1</sup> That the service of so distinguished a personage as Pisistratus in collecting the lays from those who only knew them orally should meet with no allusion till the time of Cicero (and not even then, for Cicero knows nothing about an oral tradition) is only explicable on the supposition that there was no tradition on the subject ; about which a conjecture may have been made by Josephus himself or some one before him. The Homeric critics themselves frequently mention that Homer "wrote."<sup>2</sup> And it may be added that those who

<sup>1</sup> Or. 12, § 18.

<sup>2</sup> Schol. B. on Il. i. 4 uses *γράφει* twice.

profess to give the history of the alphabet refer its origin to mythical times. A whole catalogue of suggestions on this subject is compiled by a grammarian from early Greek historians and others, and the inventors whom they name are persons like Prometheus, Kadmos, Danaos, and Musaeos.<sup>1</sup> They evidently assumed that Homer was acquainted with the art, and in assuming that he used the Ionic alphabet Plato was following the general opinion.<sup>2</sup> Bentley, indeed whose critical genius was of an erratic order, supposes the Poems to have been transliterated from the Attic alphabet, on the ground that some of the letters were invented by persons far later than Homer. His authorities are such writers as Hyginus and Tzetzes ! The theory that the Poems were transliterated from an older alphabet crops up towards the end of the second century A.D. Herodian about 170-240 A.D. knows nothing about it.

Bentley's digamma did not deserve the ridicule which Pope bestowed upon it, since it is probable that the loss of that letter furnished a conscious justification for many a metrical licence ; French and perhaps other languages exhibit something analogous. Attempts however that have been made to introduce the letter into the Homeric Poems result in the production of extraordinary forms ; Bekker's *φήνασσε* reads as much like Greek as *τήρασσε*. Since etymology shows that certain words have lost two consonants the argument which justifies the orthography *φοι* would justify *σφε*. The fact beyond which it is impossible to get is that the Epic metre was allowed by its masters to exhibit an

<sup>1</sup> Bekker's *Anecdota*, ii. 783.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Cratylus*, *passim*.

amount of licence which the more prosaic iambic did not enjoy.

Now if we have the author's attestation for the statement that each of his works, when it left his hands, consisted of 24 books, and that number has in both cases come down to us, the extent to which we can admit the possibility of interpolation is very much restricted. The probability of whole Books having been withdrawn and other matter substituted is very remote ; where a work is so well known such alterations do not easily escape notice ; and even if the substituted matter were equal in merit to the original which it had displaced, few would be disposed to recognize this. The addition of an occasional verse is of course well within the bounds of possibility ; but that of a considerable group would be easily detected, and the copies which contained them would be shunned.

It would seem that the supposed interpolation which became most famous was that of line 558 in *Iliad* ii. The line is

στῆσε δ' ἄγων ἔν' Ἀθηναίων ἴσαντο φάλαγγες.

Grote says about this "Both parties (the Athenians and the Megarians) are said to have cited verses from the Catalogue of the *Iliad*, each accusing the other of error or interpolation."<sup>1</sup> He cites for this a passage in the *Rhetoric* of Aristotle.<sup>2</sup> What Aristotle says is "the Athenians employed Homer as a witness concerning Salamis"—nothing more. Apparently Grote's authority is a much later writer, Strabo, who says that the line was interpolated either by Pisistratus or by Solon according to different authorities.<sup>3</sup> Strabo argues

<sup>1</sup> Ed. 1869, iii. 93.

<sup>2</sup> I. xvi. § 3.

<sup>3</sup> P. 394.

that the line must be an interpolation, because as a fact the ships of Aias were not near those of the Athenians. Plutarch, who repeats the story, only mentioning Solon as the interpolator, asserts that the Athenians condemn the tale as nonsense, as Solon's argument on the occasion was something wholly different.<sup>1</sup>

Now in the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides there is a Catalogue of Ships, only in Aulis; and those of Aias are placed nowhere near those of the Athenians.<sup>2</sup> These lines are supposed to be an interpolation, but whether they are or not, it is surprising that the argument of Solon should not be respected, if the author had ever heard of it. Hence if Aristotle were responsible for the statement that the line had been cited by Solon, it would be reasonable to infer that the tale had been invented between his time and that of Euripides. But Aristotle does not make this statement; he says Solon quoted Homer, without specifying the passage. And if I were in Solon's place, I should not cite that line, because I could point to a much more effective piece of evidence in the *Iliad* for the proposition that Salamis was in ancient times subject to Athens. In xii. 331 the Athenian king, Menestheus, who is in difficulties, sends for the two Aias, if possible both; "but in any case let the Telamonian Aias come with his half-brother Teukros." If Menestheus has the right to order Aias, Aias must in some way have been his dependent. But no such dependence is implied by the statement that Aias placed his vessels where the Athenian troops were standing.

<sup>1</sup> Life of Solon, § 10.

<sup>2</sup> 247 and 289.

For that, not what Strabo supposes, is the meaning of the line; and the same is asserted in xiii. 681-685. The ships of Aias and Protesilaos were on the beach; above them the wall was lowest,—“and there were the picked men of the Athenians.” Hence the removal of the line from the Catalogue will be of no use, since the same is said elsewhere.

The story then of this line having been interpolated in the Athenian interest may be dismissed; and the evidence of the Iphigeneia in Aulis seems to exclude its having ever been employed by Solon. If, as Aristotle says, the Athenians did quote Homer on the subject of Salamis, they are likely to have quoted the passage in Book xii.

It is not clear that we have at our disposal the knowledge which would justify us in deciding that any passage was interpolated. Many a critic has supposed that if he proves two passages to be inconsistent, he will have produced evidence of divided authorship; but this canon is hopelessly vicious. “Man,” says an Arabic proverb, is derived from “Oblivion”; men forget what they have said, what they have written, and what they have printed. In the ninth edition of Alison’s *History of Europe* Moreau, who has been killed off in 1813<sup>1</sup> is quoted for his opinion of Napoleon’s flight in 1814.<sup>2</sup> In the account of Napoleon’s Russian campaign we read that “at length on the 13th of October a shower of snow fell”;<sup>3</sup> and less than fifty pages later it is asserted with emphasis that “not a flake of snow had fallen” before November 7.<sup>4</sup> This we find in a printed book which had run through eight editions.

<sup>1</sup> xi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> xii. 19.

<sup>3</sup> x. 59.

<sup>4</sup> x. 101.



Few historians are as scrupulously accurate as S. Gardiner. Yet in his *History of the Great Civil War*<sup>1</sup> on page 10 of vol. ii., we read: "On the 7th which happened to be a Sunday"; and on page 11 with reference to the same day "on the 8th, the Sunday on which Cromwell was brooding, etc." In his *History of England* on the same page (iv. 362) the same person is called "Sir John Borough" and "Burroughs" without any indication that these are different spellings of the same name. In Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, where surely we might expect consistency, at any rate at the start, we read in §1 of the Introduction that the *Satz* "every change has its cause" is a "*Satz a priori*, but not pure"; and in §2 that this same proposition serves as an example of a "pure *a priori* judgment." Those who have taken the trouble to apply this canon of consistency to works of fiction by known authors find it valueless; in the later editions of *Pickwick* attention is called to an anachronism, which the author did not think worth setting right. If therefore it be quite clear that in the *Iliad* Pylaemenes attended his son's funeral some days after his own death, we may defend him by the procedure of Alison's Moreau, who expressed a posthumous judgment on the performances of Napoleon.

It is reasonable and right to apply a very high standard to the work of Homer; but to suppose him infallible is foolish, and if in the works attributed to him we occasionally find inconsistencies, they no more prove divided authorship than the cases cited would justify us in assuming the existence of two Alison's or two Kants. Such cases of inconsistency as can be plausibly

<sup>1</sup> New Edition, 1893.

made out were noticed by Hellenic critics long ago ; Aristotle is acquainted with a whole system of attack and apologetic. Those which critics have professed to discover during the last few generations can as a rule be dismissed so soon as they are inspected. A good principle which is recorded by Athenaeus is expressed thus : Not everything said *in* Homer is said *by* Homer. Hence if one of his characters makes a statement which conflicts with some other passage, there need be no inconsistency : for men (and the Homeric gods are men scarcely disguised) habitually make mistakes, or deliberately lie. And they exaggerate more frequently than they do either.

Juvenal well says *nulli gravis est percussus Achilles* "no one minds Achilleus being killed" ; hence there is no occasion for indignation at the conduct of those German critics who, without possessing a decent acquaintance with the Homeric Poems, find all sorts of contradictions. If the reader takes the trouble to turn up his Homer, he finds that the Poems are quite able to take care of themselves. But each charge of the sort that has been successfully rebutted brings discredit on the whole system which F. A. Wolf started. For they show that whatever may be the motive which leads to these vagaries, the desire for truth is not there.

The possibilities of interpolation are then very strictly limited ; and those of detecting it are still more restricted. Textual corruption has probably a somewhat larger scope, and the division of the lines into words with the assignation of the proper accents doubtless furnished the opportunity for many an error. Yet the astounding stupidity of many of the comments

which have come down to us on the whole inspires confidence in the fidelity wherewith the letters have been preserved. The Schol. B on Iliad ii. 85 had before him the group *OIAEΠANEΣΤΗΣΑΝ*. This he tells us, means *πάντες ἔστησαν*. The same interpreter tells us that in vi. 14 *ἀφνειὸς βιότοιο* means *δι' ὅλης πλουτῶν τῆς ζωῆς*. There is high authority for the assertion that *νέαται* in Iliad ix. 153 is the equivalent of *νέονται*, and this last of *ναίονται*. The grammarian Apollonius offers us in Iliad xi. 101 *αὐταρ ὁ Βῆ 'Ρῆσον* the choice between this reading and treating *Βήρησον* as a proper name.<sup>1</sup> Where scholarship is at this ebb, it is reasonable to suppose that there is some caution in the matter of handling the text.

The cryptograms, as has been seen, furnished us with an example of extraordinary fidelity in the maintenance of the text, for since each letter is required for two purposes, any alteration whatever would have rendered decipherment almost an impossibility. Decipherment is possible because the number of the letters within the anagram-unit is fixed, and the one correct solution will utilize them all, and satisfy the three conditions of sense, grammar, and metre. The introduction of any emendation would render the whole liable to the charge of arbitrariness; for in this matter we must deal not with what might be, but with what is. Now one of the objections which have been found to the first line of the Iliad is in the metre of the last words *Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος*. A scholiast on Hephaestion (a metrical writer) gravely tells us that the fifth foot is one of four short syllables. There would be no difficulty about

<sup>1</sup> Syntax, ed. Bekker, p. 66.

getting rid of this objection by emending *Πηληιάδα*, and one modern editor has actually introduced this, thinking apparently that copyists would have been allowed wilfully to mutilate the very first line of the greatest of the Greek classics ! Such a hypothesis is wildly improbable ; and, since we have seen how rigid the metre of the iambics is, there is little reason for doubting that the Poet himself would have avoided a metrical licence in his first verse, had he not had some powerful motive for admitting it. The fact that this easy emendation lay ready to hand, and nevertheless was not introduced till modern times, gives us a fair guarantee of the fidelity demanded from the copyists. The teachers and scholars demanded copies which were faithful, and were unwilling to subject Homer to the theories of grammarians and metricians. Homer was considered the highest authority on Greek,<sup>1</sup> and this being so, the sentiment was in favour of the tradition. Probably no one was ever executed for introducing strange readings into Homer, as happened with those who ventured to do this with the Koran ; but with a book which is in every one's hands and occupies the minds of those who have any literary tastes innovation has little chance. In our time an attempt has been made to substitute a Revised Version for the very faulty Authorized Version. A reactionary boasted that he had killed the Revised Version by a review, and the reports of booksellers seem to show that this was no idle boast.

It was necessary, before proceeding, to dispose—if possible, finally—of the misstatement of F. A. Wolf,

<sup>1</sup> Apollonius de Pronomine 92 b.

which has been so extraordinarily prolific. When one examines the list of authorities whom he cites—and cites falsely—for his propositions, one wonders whether any writer has the right to call another uncritical; the witnesses whose evidence since his time has settled the chief question in Greek literary history are Cicero, Josephus, Aelian, and Pausanias. The names of three among them are barbarous; and the two first have a reputation for mendacity which few other authors have earned. The fourth is a collector of myths, who probably could scarcely distinguish between truth and falsehood. The person who set the ball rolling, Heraklides Ponticus, has also a low reputation in matters of history, though he was distinguished in other fields; but, as has been seen, his evidence is absolutely and decisively against what Wolf attributed to “all antiquity.” He supposes that Lycurgus went to the descendants of Kreophylos, and “taking Homer’s poetry from them, brought it over to the Peloponnesus.” The word which he uses implies a written book.<sup>1</sup> If then the works had been brought over in their totality to Sparta by Lycurgus, what need had Pisistratus in the sixth century B.C. to collect them from his friends?

The whole voice of antiquity, if we confine ourselves to Hellas, and limit antiquity by the Christian era, asserts on the contrary that Homer like other Poets *wrote* his Poems, and that those Poems were the Iliad and the Odyssey; Aristotle attributes to him the Margites also, but, as that has disappeared, we are unable to estimate the justice of this attribution. That the Iliad and Odyssey are not cited by the number

<sup>1</sup> διεκόμισε. Compare Plato, Parmenides 128 c.



of the Book in early times is natural ; which of us cites *Pickwick* by the number of the Chapter ? We cite it by the Scene : the Trial-scene, the Temperance Meeting, the Cricket-match, and the like. Similarly the ancients cite the *Odyssey* by the Bath-scene, the Scene with the *Kyklops*, and the like. Likewise those who give references in the case of the *Iliad* mention the Catalogue, the Games, etc.

Only whereas in *Pickwick* the Cricket-match, the Temperance Meeting, and many another scene might be transposed or omitted without any injury to the structure, since they in no wise affect the series of events, this is not so in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. In those elaborate structures the omission of any scene would ruin the whole scheme ; the bridges which connect one part with another would be broken, and the chains of causation snapped. Now the construction of such works of the imagination is a difficult process which only men with certain rare gifts can carry out ; such persons however do come into the world, and therefore the operation is one whose possibility experience attests. But where is there any attested case of some one having collected scattered lays and put them together with such skill that the cento constitutes a fabric of this sort ? There is none.

Those therefore who let themselves be deluded by Wolf's misstatement had to look for inconsistencies, and—to continue plain speaking—to misstate themselves in order to find them. When a critic—famous in other fields, whether justly or not—reproduces the first two lines of *Iliad* ii. as *Other men and gods slept, but Zeus did not sleep*, he is following this method ; the Poet's

words are *Now all other gods and horse-equipped men slept all night long, only Zeus was not holden of sweet sleep.*<sup>1</sup> And few indeed are the inconsistencies discovered by recent critics which have any other origin than wilful perversion of the texts.

And what this supposed criticism failed to see was that it was carrying out the most uncritical of all operations: the treatment of fiction as history. "At the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be confirmed." If with reference to the same event two independent witnesses tell us, the one that Zeus went to bed and slept, the other that Zeus went to bed but did not sleep, the just inference is that it was a historical fact that Zeus went to bed on that occasion, but there was some uncertainty as to whether he slept or not; an uncertainty which is easily intelligible. For—unless there is collusion—only a fact can be attested by two independent witnesses; hence we are forced to believe that the scene in heaven which precedes the retirement of Zeus and his consort is a historic event! If it were not, how could two independent witnesses attest it?

It is not clear how this interesting conclusion can be eluded. Let us try another case. A more recent critic observes that whereas in *Odyssey* iv. 737 Penelope says to Euryklea "let some one call Dolios that he may immediately announce this (the departure of Telemachos) to Laertes," no further notice is taken of this order. This is, of course, false; Euryklea in her reply says "Do not trouble the old man (Laertes) who has troubles enough." Penelope suggests that Laertes

<sup>1</sup> Translation of Lang, Leaf and Myers except for *ἵπποκορυσταί*.

should be informed, but Euryklea attempts to dissuade her ; for all that her orders are carried out, as Laertes hears of the voyage of Telemachos (xvi. 142), and when we next meet Dolios (xxiv. 222), he is near Laertes. Suppose however that it were true : Penelope gives an order, and that order is not carried out. If we are to infer that we have two witnesses, one of whom knows that the order was given, the other that it was not carried out, we must have to do with a historical fact. Only there would be no inconsistency ; it would be merely a case of slaves neglecting their duties when their master is away (xvii. 320). We should however have to suppose the whole story historical ; for only so could independent witnesses record two halves of the same matter.

It is curious that even the one inconsistency which the ancients endeavoured to eliminate by violent methods is far from certainly made out. In xiii. 658 one Pylaemenes follows his son's funeral ; and in v. 576 Antilochos with Menelaos " caught " or " took " this same Pylaemenes, and it is added that Menelaos " pricked him with a spear " about the collar-bone, whereas the death of his charioteer at the hands of Antilochos is described in detail. Now " took " (ἐλέτην) does not necessarily imply slaughter (xxi. 77) ; and this particular wound was not necessarily fatal, since in viii. 325 Teukros is wounded with a stone in the same place, and is not seriously injured. Now Menelaos is not forbidden to take ransoms for his prisoners till vi. 55 ; and the words in xiii. 659 about the son of Pylaemenes " there was no *ποινή* for his dead son " cannot well mean anything else than " there was no

ransom for his dead son," *i.e.*, he was unable to ransom his son's life ; for there certainly was vengeance for this son's death, since Paris immediately afterwards slew one Euchenor by way of avenging it. Hence the most probable point of xiii. 659 is "he was unable to ransom his son's life as he had ransomed his own."

It is exceedingly unlikely that any contradiction in this case would have escaped the author's attention, for Menelaos and Antilochos are brought together in the earlier passage and again in xv. 568 in order to show Menelaos the qualifications of Antilochos for his main function. The scene between them after the horse-race must also have its purpose ; what is clear is that Antilochos is prepared to take a risk which Menelaos declines to face ; this is represented by Menelaos as taking an unfair advantage, but he is easily appeased.

The real purpose of this scene would seem to be preparation for the Odyssey. Helen and Menelaos are wanted there for the education of Telemachos ; it is however most unusual for the outraged husband to condone his wife's offence as Menelaos condones it ; Hephaestos in similar circumstances divorces Aphrodite, and demands the return of the wedding gifts ; this lady being immortal could not be dealt with more sternly. If then Menelaos is to restore Helen to her former rank and honours, his character must account for it ; and the scene with Antilochos gives him an opportunity of exhibiting it. A few civil words of apology make him forget the offence and beam with delight. We may trust Helen to be at least as successful as Antilochos.

## CHAPTER VIII

### HOMER AMONG THE GREEKS

THE period of uncertain length which intervenes between Homer and the commencement of continuous Greek literature renders both the transmission of the works and their immediate effect somewhat obscure. When Greek literature wakes, we find the authors imitating and reproducing Homer, speculating on his meaning and endeavouring to supplement his statements. Doubtless his spiritual descendants are in the first place the Poets ; but the philosophers and historians may claim to be his descendants also. The matter which he provided seems to be inexhaustible.

The names of some authors of " cyclic poems " are known, and besides a few fragments an epitome of their contents has come down to us. Those who had the complete works before them perceived their character ; they were intended to gratify the desire which many felt to know more about the persons and events which had become interesting owing to their mention in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The plan regularly followed was in the first place to put together such notices as were scattered about the two works : thus there is an allusion to *Oedipodes* in *Iliad* xxiii., and another in *Odyssey* xi. Further we read in *Iliad* iv. 377 of an expedition conducted by *Polyneikes* and *Tydeus* against *Thebes*, which according to 409 was a failure ; *Eteokles* was at the



time king of the place. An expedition presently conducted by the son of Tydeus and his friend Sthenelos succeeded. Hence Thebes does not figure in the Catalogue of states which took part in the expedition against Troy.

From these statements a good deal of history can be collected. Evidently Oedipodes belongs to the earliest period of Theban history ; for from Iliad xxiii. 679 his funeral was attended by the father of one of the heroes who took part in the Trojan expedition ; and we know from Od. xi. 275 that Oedipodes had a lengthy reign. Most likely then Eteoklees was his son and not *vice versa*.

Now it appears from the Odyssey that Oedipodes suffered many troubles of the sort which a mother's curse would bring about. Those troubles would be likely to take the form of domestic dissensions ; whence it is most likely that Polyneikes and Eteoklees were brothers. Indeed the names of the two, which signify " True Report " and " Many a dispute " render this theory very plausible.

Let us now see whether we cannot find out something more about the first Theban expedition. We know at least three persons who took part in it : Kapaneus, Tydeus, and Polyneikes. To these we may add a fourth with considerable plausibility : in Od. xv. 247 we read that Amphiaraios " perished in Thebes on account of womanly gifts," while he was still young. His date would not be quite inconsistent with his taking part in the expedition of Polyneikes. Now since Thebes had seven gates, it is most likely that there was one hero attacking at each gate ; and the number four which has been attained should be increased to

seven. It ought not to be difficult to invent three heroes for the purpose, but even Aeschylus can supply satisfactorily no more than two.

But by supposing that "womanly gifts" mean a bribe taken by a wife, we can at least discover the wife of Amphiaraos. Clearly she must have been that Eriphyle who in Od. xi. 326 took gold as the price of her own husband.

So far a good deal has been made out by combination, and mistranslation. "Womanly gifts" do not mean gifts of gold given to a woman or wife, but the gifts of Aphrodite, beauty. Hence we must after all annul the marriage between Amphiaraos and Eriphyle. And as "he died in Thebes on account of his beauty" is an enigmatical explanation of the statement "he did not reach the threshold of old age," it seems likely that ἐν Θήβησι is a corruption of ἐνθ' ἡβησε "when he reached maturity." Hence Amphiaraos must be removed from the Seven.

The rest of the history of Oedipodes is made out of etymologies of his name. Sophokles, who prefers the form Oidipous, derives it from "swollen foot." He infers that he was exposed in infancy with his feet transfixed; and indeed a child destined to behave as Oedipus did fully deserved such treatment. The older form, which Homer furnishes, means rather "he knows the feet"—and what can that mean? If one thinks hard enough, an inspiration will come. Of course it means "he can answer the riddle about the animal which begins life with four, continues with two, and ends with three feet." Most likely Oedipodes won the throne of Thebes by answering that riddle. The fact that the

Boeotians were notoriously dense makes this highly probable.

But Oidipous may also mean "the foot knows." Here too a little reflexion will show the reason why the king was so called. In the case of a blind man the foot knows the way, whereas with others it is the eye which knows it. In a dense fog the blind man is the best guide. Doubtless then Oedipus blinded himself when his crimes became public. Lehrs showed himself imbued with the cyclic spirit when he made the suggestion that Oedipus flung himself from the Sphinx's rock, and hence he explains the Homeric phrase *δεδουπότος*.

All then that was ever known about Oedipodes was what had been recorded in the *Inferno* of the *Odyssey*; the rest of the information was got by inference and cumulative etymology. That story may be, as has sometimes been thought, a nightmare; but in the *Odyssey* it is not told as a horrifying anecdote, but for the education of Odysseus. He too has a son who has never seen him; while therefore on the one hand it is unsafe to return to Ithaka undisguised, there is also considerable danger in coming disguised. In considering whether to reveal himself to Telemachos or not, he must consider this latter possibility also. Then supposing he takes the advice given him in the *Inferno* not to reveal himself to Penelope, can that step be effective: if Helen recognized him when he was disguised as a beggar, will not his wife do the same? If however Epikaste failed to recognize her son, possibly Penelope may fail to recognize her husband; hence the prospect of disguising himself effectively in this case need not be hopeless, whereas it will probably prove

wise to reveal himself to Telemachos. This piece of information will therefore help Odysseus in steering his course when he gets to Ithaka. Oedipodes and Epikaste justify their existence by these considerations just as Eriphyle justifies hers by some that are similar. Odysseus is careful to enlarge on the wealth which he is bringing home when he meets Penelope, lest the gifts offered by the Suitors prove his ruin.

Whether the painful story of Oedipodes had been thought out before he figured in the Iliad cannot easily be determined; that his interpretation of "the feet" was learned from his name may be assumed with reasonable certainty. Admetos and Alkestis obtain their affecting history in the same way; if a man is Untamed, most likely it means untamed by death: for when a ghost is asked how he met his death, the question takes the form "What fate of death tamed thee?" If his wife's name means "there is an expedient,"<sup>1</sup> most probably she was the expedient which prevented him from being "tamed." Now the phrase "there is an expedient" is one used in rather desperate cases, whence it most likely that resort was had to Alkestis only after various other expedients had been tried and had failed. The fact that an ancestor of Herakles had a name derived from this same word ἀλκή is probably what occasions his intervention in the form of an expedient for Alkestis, just as she had been one for Admetos. And since Herakles was able to bring a dog<sup>2</sup> out of Hades (Od. xi. 625), he would have less

<sup>1</sup> ἀλκή is glossed βοήθεια, ἀλέξεις. Herakl. M. 144 ἀλκήν μὴ θανεῖν. 194 θάνατον ἀμύναι μίαν ἔχων ἀλκήν. 326 ἀ. ὥστε μὴ θανεῖν.

<sup>2</sup> Or "faithful wife" Aesch. Ag. 607.

difficulty than other people in rescuing Alkestis from the same place after she had been "tamed." There was then no legend of Admetos and Alkestis, about whom nothing was known except what the *Iliad* contained ; their story is made out of their names with reference to other statements in the Scriptures.

These examples of Cyclic methods appear to be peculiarly favourable ; most of the matter collected by Welcker displays far less ingenuity. The Aethiopis of Arktinos seems to have been simply a repetition of Homeric scenes with a change of names. Achilles has a fresh antagonist in Penthesilea, an Amazon whom he kills and whose corpse he gives up to the Trojans. Achilles is then reviled by Thersites for making love to Penthesilea, and kills him ; a mutiny results and Achilles sails to Lesbos, where after sacrificing to certain gods he is purged of the murder by Odysseus. Then Memnon appears, with armour made by Hephaestus ; he kills Antilochos, and is then killed by Achilles ; the latter is about to enter Troy when he is killed by Paris. There is a struggle for the corpse of Achilles, which is rescued by Aias, while Odysseus keeps off the foe. Then come funeral games over Achilles, followed by a dispute between Aias and Odysseus for the arms. Achilles is snatched out of the pyre by Thetis and taken to the White Isle.

The author of this work gets his " facts," if they may be so called, from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* ; since Memnon was a particularly handsome man (xi. 522), and Antilochos was killed by the glorious son of Morn (iii. 188), most probably his slayer was Memnon ; and since Antilochos was a dear friend of Achilles, and was buried



in the same grave, most probably they died about the same time, and what more likely than that Achilles first avenged the death of Antilochos, and then met his own death at the hands of Paris (*Iliad* xxii. 359). Since Thetis could get her son armour made by Hephaestos, Morn ought to be able to do the same for hers; and since Menelaos according to the *Odyssey* was to be immortal, probably Odysseus is mistaken in thinking Achilles had been less fortunate. The only feature which shows any trace of originality is Penthesilea, who however is clearly taken from the story of Bellerophon; if this hero had to defeat Amazons, most likely Achilles did the same. And since Thersites rebuked Agamemnon for his amours, most likely he did the same to Achilles.

Whenever the author of this work lived, he must clearly have had precisely the same *Iliad* and *Odyssey* before him as we have, and known both works exceedingly well. And, if the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were histories, he might be congratulated on having made out a useful supplement, which of course could only be trusted in so far as it reproduced actual statements from those works. And he perhaps has the merit of offering a conjecture as to the meaning of the words in *Od.* xi. 545-548. Thetis offered the Arms of Achilles, and various persons urged their claims; the Sons of the Trojans and Pallas Athene decided in favour of Odysseus and against Aias. The trial took place at the Ships. This author supposed the matter in dispute to have been which did best service in rescuing the corpse; and since Odysseus (*Od.* v. 107) fought the Trojans on that occasion, it may be guessed that Aias

carried the corpse. A rather brighter suggestion than usual is given in the Scholia, viz., that the Sons of the Trojans were those slain by Odysseus while rescuing it. But this seems to be excluded by the phrase "by the ships." The line which names this extraordinary tribunal is not, as Aristarchus thought, an interpolation, and if we observe that it has δίκασαν, not δικάζον, we can make out its import. If the Arms had been adjudged to Odysseus by a mortal judge, doubtless the anger of Aias would have been turned against the last, and Odysseus could have pleaded that the judge was to blame. Hence the judges must be such that the blame cannot be thrown on them. Now Athene asserts in Od. xxii. 230 that Troy was taken by the plan of Odysseus; and the Sons of the Trojans adjudging the Arms of Achilleus to Odysseus means simply that the storming of Troy bore witness to his having been its conqueror. The words "by the Ships" mean probably "when the expedition was over." The plan for storming Troy was communicated by Athene to Odysseus, not to Aias. Hence it is said of Athene and the Trojans δίκασαν, not δικάζον.

But it is only on the supposition that the Iliad and Odyssey are history that this plan of piecing together bits of information and working them into a narrative has any merit; since Aias, Odysseus, and the rest are fictions, the operation is valueless. And, as Aristotle saw, it is wholly inartistic. If Homer had introduced Penthesilea, he would have done so because there was some part required by the plot which only an Amazon could play; there would have been a situation which an Amazon would suit, and so Penthesilea would have

come into existence. But, so far as we can see, Penthesilea was introduced by Arktinos solely for the purpose of making Achilles reproduce the part of Bellerophon, and finding an opportunity for repeating various scenes in the *Iliad*. Memnon has a purpose in the passage of the *Odyssey* for which he was created; he is a measure for the beauty of a man (also invented for the occasion) who had been slain by the son of Achilles. Similarly Philoktetes is a measure for the skill of Odysseus with the bow, and apparently has no other use.

The Destruction of Ilion by the same author was similarly the working out of hints contained in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but seems to have exhibited some ingenuity in the invention of new agents, who indeed were very much required on the Trojan side at any rate, as by now the chief personages had fallen. The bulk of the matter was however contained in *Od.* viii. 500–520, and the description of what happens to a stormed city in *Iliad* ix. 592–594. His notion that the Achaeans within the city summoned those in the ships by a beacon is got from *Iliad* xviii. 211. He had to invent some one to send this signal; and gets his idea of a disguised spy from *Od.* iv. 245 *sq.* where Odysseus plays this part. The name which Odysseus there takes, Dektes “receiver” is purely functional (=beggar), and Sinon (destroyer) which Arktinos invented is of the same type. The death of Astyanax is got from *Il.* xxiv. 735; Andromache prophesies in that passage that she will sail as a slave with the Achaeans, and it is a reasonable conjecture that she was assigned to Neoptolemos.

All therefore that can be learned from these works is that their authors had before them the same *Iliad*

and Odyssey as we possess, and nothing more that threw any light on the history of either Ilion or the Greek states which took part in the supposed Trojan War. And it would appear that those who possessed them quite understood their character ; persons who have not got them can assign them a higher value. To do so is however like treating Josephus as an authority independent of the Bible, or getting Biblical history out of the Talmud.

That this is the only admissible account of these works appears from certain obvious considerations. In the *Odyssey* Demodokos gets his information from Apollo or the Muses (viii. 489). It would be unpardonable for Homer to assert this, and ridiculous besides, if he had got it from the work of Arktinos. If however Homer and Arktinos, being independent witnesses, agree on actual details, the story of the Trojan Horse, etc., must be historical ; for only if it were historical could two independent witnesses agree about it. It remains that Arktinos did as has been described, put together the notices in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and supplemented them to the best of his ability. And in the *Odyssey* the story of the Fall of Troy has a purpose. It is necessary that Odysseus should betray himself to Alkinoos. His vanity makes him demand of Demodokos the tale of the most brilliant achievement in his life : the storming of Troy after so many failures, by him who is now a suppliant and a beggar in a foreign land. Naturally the recitation stirs feelings which cannot be hidden. It would be like reciting the Battle of Trasimene or of Cannae to Hannibal when in exile. But further this lay of Demodokos answers some

objections which the story of the Horse (invented, as we have seen, for another purpose) arouses. Supposing the Trojans had chosen to destroy the Horse? Was not this risk sufficiently great to deter Odysseus from the whole scheme? The answer is that there was a fatality about the matter, probably learned from an oracle; for though in the *Iliad* there was no mention of Delphi having been consulted before the expedition to Troy, in the *Odyssey* that piece of information is supplied (viii. 80). It is interesting besides that Homer credits Alkinoos with using the "method of difference." Demodokos sings a lay about Troy which is by no means affecting, and Odysseus weeps; he sings a merry lay and Odysseus enjoys it (viii. 368); then he sings again at the request of Odysseus about Troy, and Odysseus is bathed in tears. Clearly then what makes Odysseus weep is not the music, but the mention of Troy.

Just then as the Trojan Horse came into existence in order to give Odysseus an opportunity of displaying his coolness, so Troy is stormed in this particular way to give him an opportunity of yielding to his emotion. But if we choose to take fiction as history, then doubtless we can indulge in hypotheses for the purpose of filling in the gaps of the narrative. They will have the same value as the supplements to *Edwin Drood*.

The rest of the Cyclic Epics, of which an epitome is preserved, are quite clearly of the same type. They certainly add something to what is stated in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*; but usually the source of their information is fairly obvious. If the author of the *Little Iliad* asserted that after the death of Paris Helen became the wife of Deiphobos, he got it from the statement in



Od. viii. 517 that at the storming of Troy Odysseus went with Menelaos to the house of Deiphobos. Why should Menelaos go thither except to secure Helen? Hence she must have been married to Deiphobos.<sup>1</sup> Hence Paris must have been killed. Who killed him? Since he was an archer, most likely he was shot by some other archer. Most probably this other archer was Philoktetes, who during the period covered by the Iliad was lying ill in Lemnos, but according to Od. viii. 219 did use his bow and arrow in the war with great success. This then must have been after the death of Hektor. Some one must have gone to Lemnos to fetch him, and for some reason; further some one must have cured him. As it is stated in Il. ii. 725 that the *Argives* were soon to think about him, most likely it was the most distinguished Argive who fetched him; hence we infer the mission of Diomed. The need for Philoktetes was revealed by Helenos, whom Odysseus waylaid, and compelled to reveal this secret. This particular detail is evidently a combination of the story of Dolon in Il. x. with that of Proteus in Od. iv.

There is no difficulty about referring the rest of the epitome of these works to their sources. They appear to have had no artistic or other merit, except that of displaying close acquaintance with the Iliad and Odyssey. Hence it is probably an advantage to both their authors and to us that they have not been preserved. Possibly from their slavish adherence to the matter found in "the Scriptures" we may infer that they addressed themselves to critical audiences, in the sense that those audiences would expect everything to be justified from

<sup>1</sup> This would also account for Deiphobos following her in iv. 276.

Homer ; any serious discrepancy would bring discredit on the supplement. But so long as the Homeric text suggested or admitted their inferences, they were safe. Thus if any one asked how it could be possible that Helen had married Deiphobos after Paris, the argument adduced above would have silenced the doubter. Probably it ought not to have silenced him. For of Priam's sons Deiphobos is at the end of the *Iliad* the only one left of sufficient importance to take Hektor's place. *Some one* had to be present when Helen made her experiment on the Wooden Horse ; and Helenos would have been too dangerous, being a prophet. Athene takes the form of Deiphobos in *Il.* xxii. 227 ; but (as in other cases) the reader may think the real Deiphobos is meant, whose desertion of Hektor is justified by the fact that Achilles misses his first shot at Hektor ; Deiphobos in consequence leaves Hektor to dispatch his adversary. Odysseus and Menelaos probably go to the palace of Deiphobos, not because he is the husband of Helen, but because he is now the most important person in Troy, and the most dangerous adversary left. If Menelaos accompanies Odysseus on this occasion, the reason is that in *Od.* iv. 105 Menelaos asserts that the one person among the heroes who fought at Troy whose fate troubles him most is Odysseus ; a proposition which there is little, if anything in the *Iliad* to justify.

The method, if it may be thus designated, is as clearly illustrated by Pindar as by any one. He has a long account of the origin of the Kentauroi in *Pythia* ii. 40-90. The data are : (1) *Iliad* xiv. 317, where it appears that Peirithoos is the son of Zeus and of the wife

of Ixion. (2) Od. xxi. 296 a Kentauros gives trouble in the house of Peirithoos. Peirithoos is evidently to be derived from *πειρᾶν θεάν* and Kentauros from *κεντεῖν αὔραν*. Now that *HPA* was an anagram for *AHP* was observed by Theagenes. Hence we can identify the goddess, and learn the parentage of Kentauros; a Cloud, *νεφέλη* = *ἀήρ* was substituted for Hera; like the "image" which was substituted for Aeneas (Iliad v. 449). Further, from Ixion's name we learn that he was a Suppliant, and so must have shed kindred blood. A further detail is obtained from the trap laid for Ares by Hephaestos in Odyssey viii. 296. And since we know that horses have winds for their parents from Iliad xx. 223, it is probable that a creature whose parents were Ixion and "the air" would be half-man, half-horse. By combination of passages with a liberal use of etymology, the whole of this myth is constructed.

In the account of the death of Antilochos which Pindar gives after the author of the Aethiopis the situation in Iliad viii. 80, where one of Nestor's horses is wounded by an arrow shot by Paris, is reproduced. For the death of Antilochos the data are Od. iii. 112, and iv. 202, where he is said to have been slain by the brilliant son of Morn. However his name may very well mean "one who lies down instead of some one else," and as *λέχος* is used of a funeral couch (Iliad xxiv. 589), most likely he died in some one else's stead; and it may be conjectured that he was a substitute for his father. But since Nestor did not ordinarily take part in battles, this had to be explained from the Iliad; and since there Nestor incurred some risk owing

to one of his horses being wounded by Paris, most likely the same occurred again. Hence we get the statements of Pindar in *Pyth.* vi. 28-40. That the slayer of Antilochos was Memnon was, as has been seen, inferred from the notice of the beauty of the latter in *Od.* xi. 522, which made it probable that he was the son of Morn.

Antilochos was created, as has been seen, for the function of conveying to Achilleus the news of his friend's death; the reason for killing him off in the *Odyssey* seems to be that the *Iliad* forgot to insist that Antilochos was a special friend of Achilleus: <sup>1</sup> the qualities required for his function are that he should be a dare-devil, that his presence should not be of prime importance in the battle-field, and that he should have attracted the notice of Menelaos; for those who thought that it would be still better if he were a special friend of Achilleus, the *Odyssey* has him buried in the same grave. Before that can be done he has to be killed off; and this has the further advantage that it gives the Achaeans a reason for continuing the siege after the death of Achilleus; Nestor compels them.

The story of the Argonauts is found as early as Hesiod, and it exhibits the same mode of construction. It is true that in the account of that expedition in *Odyssey* xii. 69 foll. the *Argo* is said to be in all men's minds. The inference drawn by Nutzhorn was that no one had ever heard of her before; and it is likely to be sound. The words of the text are that it sailed from Aetes, and was convoyed by Here, because Ieson was dear. This implies that the reader is sufficiently familiar with the story to know that Ieson was the captain; but it

<sup>1</sup> It is mentioned xxiii. 556.

is unusual for a vessel to sail from a person ; it sails rather from a place. The position of Aeetes, the brother of the person who is telling this story, is therefore far from clear. If it were not for the mention of Ieson we should suppose that Aeetes was the captain, and that the words *παρ' Αἰήταο πλέουσα* meant "being commanded by Aeetes." This is probably the case ; and the words wherein Ieson occurs should have been divided and accented *ἐπεὶ φίλος ἦεν, ἤ σῶν* "since he, Aeetes, was dear, she let him go safely through." Hence Ieson got into this passage through misreading of the text. By a similar process it was discovered that Epeus had the task of carrying water for the Achaeans. His words are (*Iliad* xxiii. 670)

*οὐχ ἄλῃς ὅττι μάχης ἐπιδεύομαι*

which, if we divide them *μάχης ἐπιδεύομαι*, will mean, "is it not sufficient that I get drenched during the battle ? " From this we may infer with certainty that he carried pails of water. About Kaeneus (*Iliad* i. 264) it is discovered that this person *puella fuerat, sed a Neptuno vitiata impetravit ut vir fieret*. This appears to be an inference from the words *Καινέα τ' Ἐξάδιόν τε*, read *καὶ νέα τέξα δι' ὅν τε*, and interpreted *et puella propter quem peperit etiam Polyphemum*. The inference is sound.

Once connected with the Argo, Ieson becomes connected with Lemnos, where there was according to the *Iliad* an Ieson father of Euneos (*Iliad* vii. 469) and husband of Hypsipyle ; this Euneos dealt in wine and slaves (xxi. 41) and his name doubtless means "good shipper." His father's name seems to mean "healer" (though more correctly, perhaps, one who causes to



heal); and it may be suspected that he gets it from the article wherein his son dealt, viz., wine, which in the Iliad itself is used medicinally. Ieson is next brought into connexion with the family of Aison, of which the pedigree is given in Odyssey xi. 259, on the ground that as *ΑΙΜΩΝ* was father of *ΜΑΙΩΝ* (Iliad iv. 394), most probably *ΑΙΣΩΝ* was father of *ΙΑΣΩΝ*. (This is suggested by Eustathius). This brings him into connexion with Iaolkos. The name "causes to heal" suggests that he had a son trained to the medical profession; as Chiron is the only person at this period known to have taken medical pupils, doubtless Ieson's son went to his school. By this time we really know a whole lot about him. And to the rest of the geographical information which has been obtained we may add that the Aeaeon Isle was clearly somewhere in the Black Sea; for *Ποντοπόρος νηῦς* may well mean a vessel which sails the Pontos.

Hence it occurs that in spite of the Argo being in all men's minds she had no existence before the passage of the Odyssey; and that owing to a misreading of the text Ieson became her captain, and all that was made out about him was obtained through cyclic methods. Kirke knew about this vessel, because her brother Aeetes had been her captain.

That the Lyric Poets get their material from Homer may be said to be well known. Stesichoros "appears to have been an imitator of Homer"<sup>1</sup>; the recently recovered odes of Bacchylides are "scraps of the Homeric banquet"; and Pindar's information is derived either directly from the Iliad and Odyssey or indirectly from the cyclists.

<sup>1</sup> Dio Chrysostom i. 83 R.

The consequences of mixing the Homeric mythology with that evolved by later writers appears in many a notice contained in the excellent *Lexicon Homericum* of Ebeling, whose co-operators deal variously in this matter. Aethre, we are told, is the mother of Theseus. This lady is mentioned once in the *Iliad*, iii. 144, as the daughter of Pittheus and handmaid of Helen. In i. 265 Theseus is mentioned as a personage whom Nestor remembers from his youth<sup>1</sup>; his mother, then, if she had ever served as a handmaid, should by Helen's time have been at the least pensioned off. The authority for making her the mother of Theseus is Apollodorus. Homer mentions merely that she was the daughter of Pittheus. Now since, as has been seen, the Athenians learned the names of both Erechtheus and Menestheus from Homer, it is likely that they also learned that of Theseus, who is certainly brought into connexion with Athens in *Od.* xi. 322. That his father's name was Aegeus they learned from the passage in the *Iliad*. It was desirable to know in addition the name of his mother. Now Menestheus was according to Homer the son of Peteos; and since Homer is scarcely more particular about the orthography of proper names than were English writers in the seventeenth century, it was thought likely that Peteos and Pittheus are the same person. And since we have three names of Athenian kings in Homer, Erechtheus, Peteos, and Menestheus, who is at least no earlier than Theseus, it is somewhat difficult to work the last into the series. The supposition that Aethre was the daughter of the person who was father of Menestheus, and was mother

<sup>1</sup> There seems no reason for doubting the genuineness of this line.

of Theseus, will help us somewhat, though it will introduce certain difficulties. Plutarch makes Theseus and Menestheus rivals, the latter being the first demagogue. The character of Aethre and of Pittheus suffers somewhat in the process of evolution.

Aristotle ought to have seen the truth about Attic Tragedy, but his account of its origin is wanting in clearness. These Tragedies are Homeric *Miracle-plays*; they are a variety from the work of the Rhapsodes. The Rhapsode recites scenes, and is said to *act* them<sup>1</sup>; if Achilles Tatius is to be believed, he had "properties" such as a sham sword.<sup>2</sup> The Rhapsode however had to confine himself to the Homeric text, and where a scene involved several speakers, he must have modulated his voice in accordance with the needs of the dialogue. It was natural that the idea should arise of dividing such a scene between two rhapsodes, who would respectively, *e.g.*, take the parts of Hektor and Andromache. If Aristotle is right in asserting that Aeschylus introduced a second actor, he must be regarded as the inventor of the drama; for though it is doubtful whether a drama can be acted without at least three actors, it is self-evident that it cannot be produced with less than two. The existing Rhesos and Kyklops may be taken as examples of the earliest form of Miracle-play, since the Homeric scenes are reproduced with comparatively little alteration, except for the introduction of the Chorus. The metre has indeed been accommodated to that which differs least from real conversation, and the dialect similarly modernized.

<sup>1</sup> Plato, *Ion* 535 c σὺν ὁ ῥαψωδὸς καὶ ὑποκριτής.

<sup>2</sup> *iii.* § 20.

Although the accommodation of the Chorus to the story is regarded by Aristotle as artistic, it is likely that there was no original connexion. In our day a Concert is apt to consist of musical performances alternating with recitations. But the two are not usually connected.

The following passage from Burton's *History of Scotland* indicates the extraordinary uniformity where-with the human mind works. He is speaking of the year 1561 :—

There were pageants or exhibitions of a less innocent character, which yet had a tendency that made them not entirely unwelcome to the Congregation. These were the ritualistic revels, called by the French the *fêtes des foux*. They are not to be confounded with the legitimate mysteries, which were attempts, however unseemly, to impress religious notions on the people by the acting of the critical events in Scripture history in such a manner as to seize the attention and attract the admiration of the uninstructed. The others had nothing in them to aim at the reverent or devout but were acts of profane ribaldry, of which the point was the travestying, by some lewd and brutal antithesis, the most solemn ordinances of the Church. They were generally pinned to something or other in sacred history.

These were to Comedy what the Christian Miracle-plays were to Tragedy. For Greek Comedy was also a religious performance, and we may suspect that its beginnings are to be found in the humorous lay of Demodokos in the *Odyssey*, or the similar passages in the *Iliad* wherein the divine beings are made ridiculous. The description here given of the Miracle-play or Mystery

will be found exceedingly felicitous if applied to the Greek drama, though perhaps the word "uninstructed" is unsuitable. Doubtless the spectators were thoroughly familiar with the Homeric stories; and some plays were solutions of problems which the Homeric text suggested. In Od. xi. 276 it is stated that the crimes of Oedipus were suddenly made known to mankind by the gods. The play of Sophokles offers a solution of the problem how they came to be revealed. How comes it, some one might ask, that Menelaos receives Helen back and honours her as much as any other queen is honoured after her infidelity and the disasters which it has occasioned? The Helen of Euripides offers an answer; the Helen of Troy was "a phantasm of the Living"; the real Helen was elsewhere. The end of the Telamonian Aias is veiled in mystery; the Odyssey merely gives hints. In the Aias of Sophokles everything is made clear. If Plato's view was widely held, that suicide was the most terrible crime that could be committed, Homer may be excused for being mysterious on the subject.

When the Miracle-play has come into existence, it ordinarily goes somewhat beyond Scripture for its subjects. This appears to be the case even with the Persian Miracle-plays called *Ta'ziyah*, which should properly reproduce the death of Husain and the sorrows of Fatimah, who had indeed died some fifty years before the catastrophe. Longfellow's Miracle-play gets its material from an Apocryphal Gospel, which might well be regarded as analogous to a Cyclic Poem.

Aristotle's reason for the preference given by the Tragedians to the Cyclists is likely to be right; in the



Iliad and Odyssey everything is so closely connected that the parts cannot be easily removed. His reason however for the restriction of the subjects to particular heroes seems infelicitous. It is like saying that our hymns only mention Biblical characters because their names are best suited for poetry. We wish to hear in church about Moses, Joshua, Elijah, etc., because they *are* Biblical ; and the Greek tragedies are about Agamemnon, The Seven Against Thebes, Philoktetes, Phoenix, etc., because they are Scriptural personages, and so are surrounded with a halo of sanctity. If the Cyclists have taken the trouble to discover more about them than the Scripture contains, the Tragedian gladly avails himself of their services.

The departure from Scripture is however compensated in two ways. In the first place, as has been seen, the Cyclist does not really invent ; he merely infers, or reproduces Homeric situations. And the scenes in the Tragedies are to some extent reproduction of Homeric scenes with changes of name. The Oedipus Tyrannus starts with a plague ; it is this time in Thebes, but it is really the plague of Iliad i. Oedipus quarrels with a prophet, Tiresias ; they are only fresh names for Agamemnon and Kalchas. Kreon in the Antigone maintains a disastrous course in opposition to the arguments of Haemon ; they are in reality our friends Achilles and Phoenix of Iliad ix., somewhat disguised. Look carefully at Kassandra in the Agamemnon ; she is only a mask for the Homeric Theoklymenos, who tells the Suitors what is going to happen, and is ridiculed for his pains (Od. xx. 351, etc.). After the murder Aegisthos appears ; and, as has been seen, he repro-

duces the remarks of Laertes when he hears of the death of the Suitors.

The dependence of the Tragedians on Homer is such that it may be doubted whether the former had any ideas of their own, or would have ventured to use them if they had. For (in the second place) when the tragic agent is not merely a Homeric agent with his name changed, the fine sayings of the Poet are reproduced, often enough in contexts which they do not suit. When Odysseus and Telemachos meet after their long parting, their crying is compared with wonderful power to that of birds whose unfledged young have been stolen (Od. xvi. 216-218); but does this simile really suit the war-cry of Menelaos and Agamemnon (Agam. 50-52)? When we are told that Menelaos after hearing the apology of Antilochos cheered up like green ears after dew, the beauty of the illustration is apparent (Iliad xxiii. 598); but does it equally well suit the case of the murderess Klytaemnestra, when she is bespattered with the blood of her victim (Agam. 1390)? The simile is ghastly; nor is it likely that the murderess would *beam*.

Doubtless these Tragedians understood their business excellently; had it been otherwise even Professor Murray's genius would have been unable to win them new laurels in our time. But Aristotle cannot have derived his theory of unity from their works, since few if any of them display it. The Oedipus Tyrannus is one of the dramas which come nearest unity; but even there the arrival of the messenger from Corinth has not a reason in what has preceded; Homer would have made his coming due in some way to the plague

in Thebes. Still they delight audiences in our day when brilliantly rendered ; but to the audiences for which they were originally intended they had numerous attractions which they forfeit in their modern environment. To the Greek who knew his Homer as we know our Bibles they had the pleasure of *recognition* of the old Homeric scenes and phrases. He expected these (we fancy) no less than he expected to be thrilled by the fresh presentation of Scriptural stories. Similarly, successful hymn-writers are not original poets ; they are those who can reproduce Biblical images and phrases with the greatest felicity.

Now our heavenly Aaron enters  
By His blood within the veil ;  
Joshua now is come to Canaan,  
And the kings before him quail.  
See he plants the tribes of Israel  
In their promised resting place ;  
See, our great Elijah offers  
Double portion of his grace.

That is the way to write hymns.

Doubtless the scraps of the Homeric banquet which had originally been dressed by the Cyclists suffered from staleness if not something worse by the time they came to be once more served up by the Attic tragedians. It is the natural result of the dissection of statues. The plots of all three parts of the Aeschylean trilogy are travesties of the Homeric stories. Homer knows nothing about "a banquet of children's flesh," or of Klytaemnestra murdering Agamemnon in his bath, or about Agamemnon sacrificing his daughter, or Orestes killing his mother, or such an atrocity having

the authority of Apollo. All these are false inferences originally drawn by the Cyclists, and such as Homer would have rejected with horror. When Aristotle thinks that the tragic hero should have committed a peccadillo, else he will not have earned his fate, the inference is drawn from the Homeric Hektor, Achilleus, and Odysseus ; the hero of Attic tragedy has a tendency to be a real criminal. The plots of Euripides, *e.g.*, in the Orestes and the Ion, are horrible ; the heroes and heroines have no redeeming feature. Where the heroes were not turned into criminals there was at least a tendency to vulgarize them, such as appears to be found in the Christian miracle-plays :

Old father Adam was first to propose,  
As being author of all our woes ;  
But he was refused, for fear, said they,  
He would stop to eat apples on the way.  
Abel came next, but petitioned in vain,  
Because he might meet with his brother Cain.  
Noah too was refused lest his weakness for wine  
Should delay him at every tavern-sign.  
And John the Baptist could not get a vote  
On account of his old-fashioned, camel's hair coat.

The heroes in Euripides have similarly degenerated and become vulgar, as also have their wives.

Besides being the source of all Greek poetry Homer is credited by some authors, of whom one at least has a habit of knowing his subject, with being the source of Greek *philosophy* also. Dionysius of Halikarnassos asserts that through Homer all other studies came into Greece, and ultimately philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Maximus of Tyre

<sup>1</sup> Ed. Reiske vi. 756.

in deriving the Platonic philosophy from Homer rather happily applies to the case the words of Menelaos about Telemachos: Such are his feet, and such his hands, such the flashes of his eyes and the hair of his head.<sup>1</sup> The mode whereby we should demonstrate the same proposition would be somewhat different from theirs.

It does not appear to be the case that the Hellenic deities had originally any special functions. The god of a community is expected to do everything for it; whence we find deities whom we have learned to associate with particular functions attending to operations for which they would seem unqualified. It is a surprise to the student of the Phoenician inscriptions when he first reads that to rifle tombs is "an abomination unto Ashtoreth"; we should not have expected her to mind. Similarly the virgin goddess Artemis appears to be associated with a function which would far more naturally be assigned to a matron. It would appear then to be the case that after communities of deities arise through conflation of tribes or confederations attempts are made to form the deities into a family and to assign to them different interests.

Possibly in such cases the sole clue is not etymology, but it is the easiest and therefore the most commonly employed. The ancient grammarians to whom comparative grammar was unknown are not to be blamed for working out such a system as we find in the *Cratylus* of Plato; the moderns have no excuse for doing the like. In a few cases the modern can find a true analogue to a divine name, and then he is able to trace with fair facility how a particular function came to be

<sup>1</sup> Or xxvi. 3.



assigned to this particular deity. The case of Zeus is the most familiar ; its Indian analogue means " the sky," which at times is personified ; our exclamation " good heavens ! " shows that we are not yet above doing the like. The working of sound laws connects this name in Greek with the idea of Life ; hence in Homer " to live " is the same as " to obtain a function from Zeus," and Athenaeus has a story of a physician who took the title because he was a source of life to his patients.

Few divine names are like this. Their etymology is ordinarily obscure, and if ever we learn it, the word is usually found to signify something like " lord," " mistress." The recently discovered Lydian texts have shown that the latter is the meaning of Kybele. Artemis is probably foreign, but to the Greeks it seemed to mean " virgin," and that is a likely name for a goddess. Vergil's phrase about Camilla <sup>1</sup>

*Illa—Mare per medium fluctu suspensa tument*

*Ferret iter celeris nec tingeret aequore plantas*

reads like an etymology of Aphrodite in the sense of " foam-walker " ; such a phrase might conceivably be in use for " damsel," just as in Turkish " mad-blood " is the ordinary word for " young man."

What seem to have been the chief sources of theological etymologies were the names of the cities to which the goddesses belonged ; for the theory prevailed that the cities were called after the goddesses and not *vice versa*. The most familiar case is that of Athene ; but we may feel fairly sure that the same is the case with Artemis ; she gets her function of shooting from her

<sup>1</sup> Aen. vii. 810.

title Ephesie "of Ephesus," and if Ephesus is not mentioned in the Homeric poems we may infer that it was too recent a settlement to be mentioned. It is likely that Paphie "of Paphos" gives her function to Aphrodite.

Now *'Αργείη*, the title of Here, offers an excellent etymology for theological purposes; it is *ἀεργείη*, "inaction," and the person who makes her the sister and consort of Life has possessed himself of the foundation of the Aristotelian philosophy. Logic is based on the existence of a middle state between the two contraries; all colours are *relatively* black or white; but because a thing is not black it does not follow that it is absolutely white. Between Life and Death there is the middle state *inactivity*; and the substitution of the names *energy* for Life and *dynamis* or *potentiality* for Inactivity does not alter the system. With this key Aristotle unlocks the secrets of the world. And in giving this interpretation to the Homeric Here he was probably right. She is the sister and consort of the Life-principle; and who shall say which is the older? Did the hen precede the egg or the egg the hen? Did the genus precede the species or the species the genus? When Here first appears she is true to her name; Achilles would have struck Agamemnon, but Here sends Athene to bid him stay his hand. Consideration leads to inaction. For once the Planktae let a ship escape, or cease to function; that is because Here convoys the ship, which is called Argo after her.

The power of regarding the deities simultaneously as abstractions and as magnified human beings ought not to surprise us. *Persuasion* would seem to be a

somewhat abstruse abstraction; yet sacrifices were offered to her in Athens. Ares is given by the Poet a sister Strife, and for sons Flight and Fright. The head of such a family should be an abstraction; yet in the secret preface the Poet is bidden send this personage to his Thracian home with sacrifices, prayers and torches. He who would introduce consistency in such cases has a similar task to that of the person who would introduce consistency into the *Inferno*: where, though the body is dissolved and the soul has no more reality than a dream, Tityos covers nine acres, and has his entrails gnawed by vultures.

Even this inconsistency is accompanied by one notable merit; it enables the author to appeal simultaneously to minds of very different development and idiosyncrasy. He supplies the naive pagan with tales about the gods; but he also furnishes the philosopher with a theory of the universe. The lines similarly work on the feelings by their brilliancy; but one who studies them coolly finds that what they contain is not merely ornament, but so to speak bricks necessary for the maintenance of the fabric.

We may conclude with an illustration of this from some lines that have been regarded as the most affecting in the whole *Iliad*: they belong to the scene wherein Helen is told by Priam to identify the Achæan heroes. She looks out for her brothers Kastor and Polydeukes, and wonders why they are not there. The true reason is that they were already held down by the life-breeding earth, at home in Lakedaemon, their dear native land. (Il. iii. 234, 244).

Supposing these lines were omitted, would the whole

poem break down? The answer is in the affirmative. Helen has grown tired of Paris, and besides Priam and Hektor has no friends in Ilion or any who will treat her with common civility (xxiv. 775). Why then does she not take some opportunity of escaping to the Achæan lines? <sup>1</sup> Now it is mainly on brothers that a man (and most likely a woman) relies when a quarrel arises (Od. xvi. 97); if then her brothers were among the warriors, she could rely on them if the intention of Menelaos proved to be not to reinstate her as queen, but to punish her as an adulteress. Consequently the fact that she looks out for them and cannot find them accounts for her remaining in Troy which otherwise she had every reason for quitting. Only if she were to quit Troy the whole story would break down. Hence Kastor and Polydeukes are invented for the purpose of answering this objection.

The passage about them in the *Inferno* may have some profound meaning, but it reads like an attempt to reconcile the statement that they were "held down by the earth" with the assertion in Od. iv. 569 that Menelaos on the ground of his being the husband of Helen would not die but be transferred to the Elysian fields. If being the husband of Helen gave a right to immortality, surely her brethren would not die like ordinary mortals. Advantage can be taken of the phrase "held down by the earth"; that need not imply that they are dead—at least in the ordinary sense. They still share a sort of life between them.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Euripides, *Troiades* 1015.

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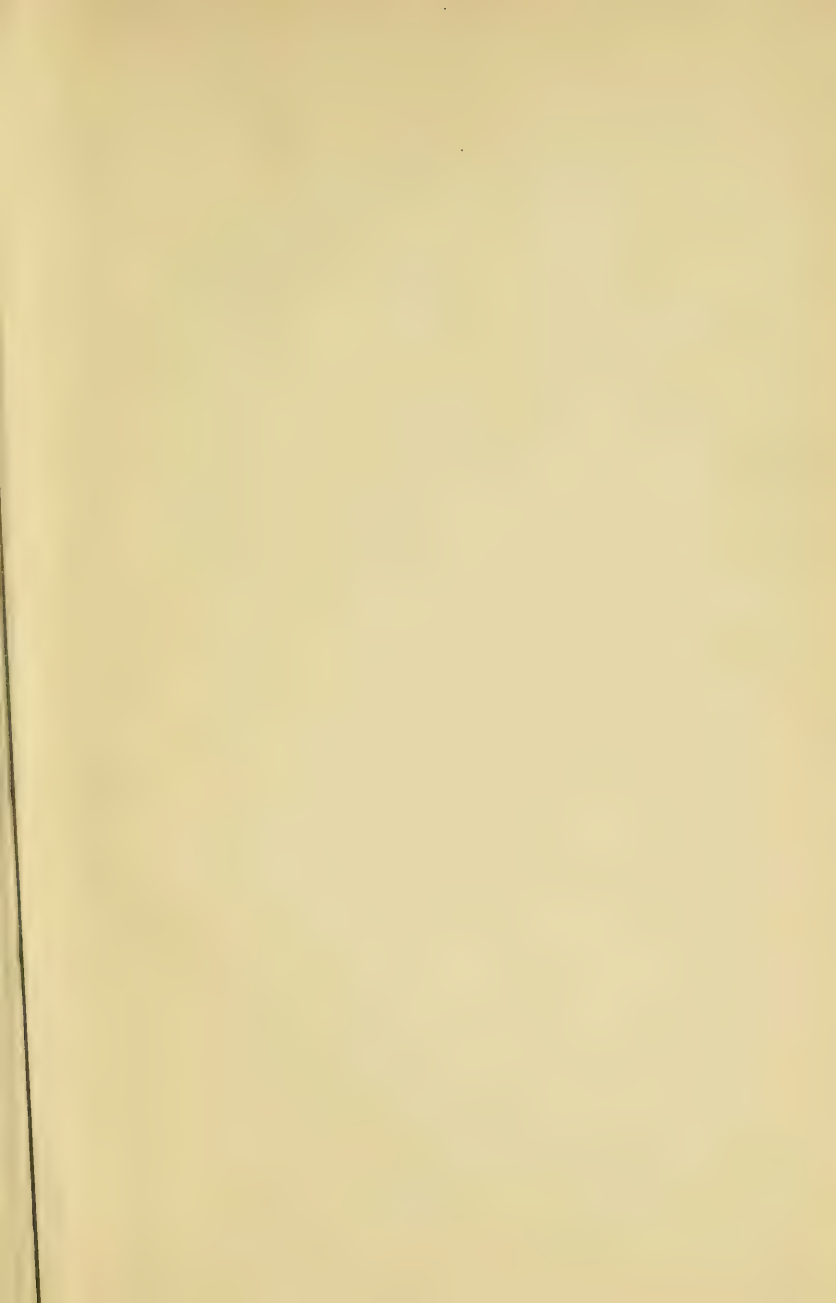
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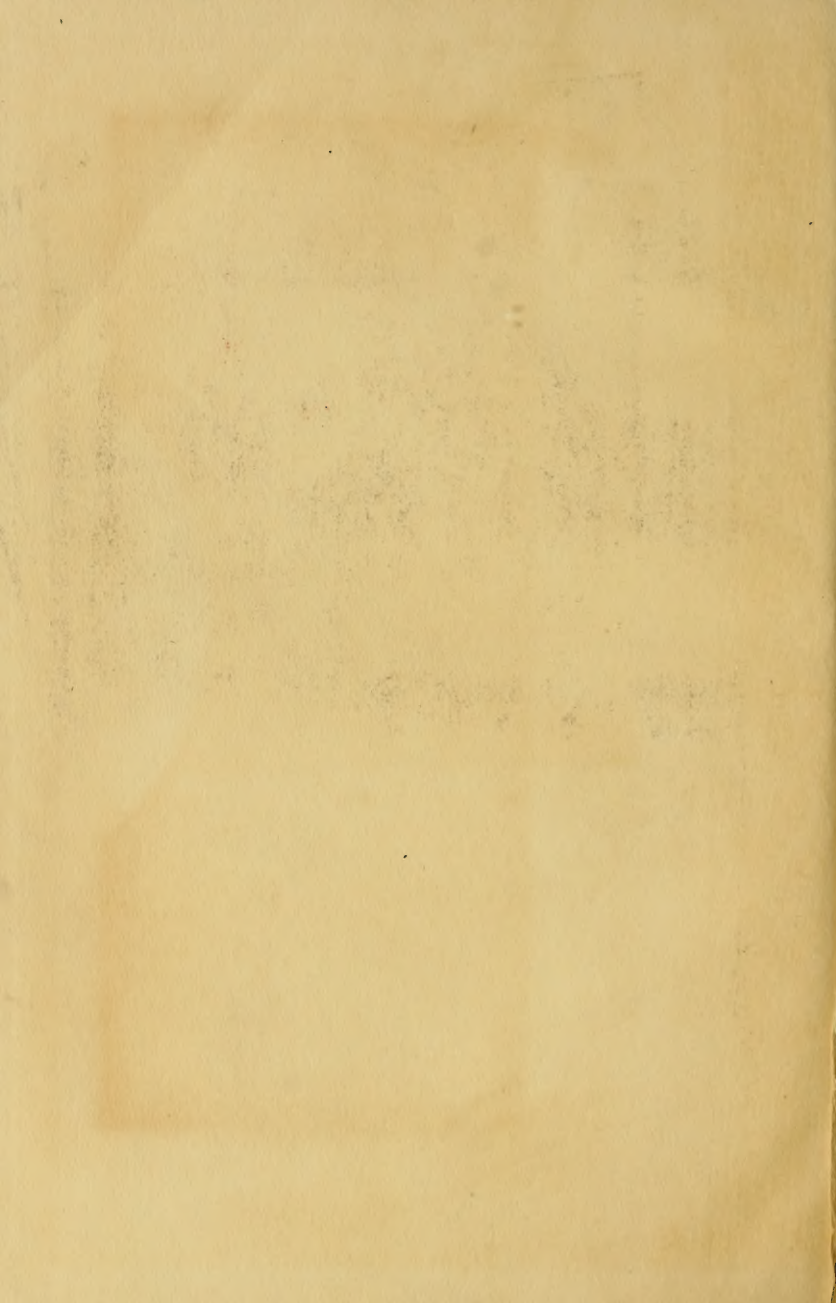
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